

MACLEAN'S

FEAR FACTOR
2003 arrives with
a terrorist scare

WANTED: NEW LEADERS
Peter Mansbridge on reshaping
Canada's political landscape

FRIENDS AS FAMILY
Turning to kindred
spirits instead of kin

AVRIL'S EDGE

How an 18-year-old from
Napanee, Ont., is surviving
SUCCESS BY SHANDA DEZIEL



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Avril Lavigne



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TIME TO ROCK THE VOTE

The PM wanted to restore faith in politicians. Will he have to leave to do that?

IN MY OTTAWA DAYS, I used to have the occasional lunch or drink with a senator or from the *Peoples of Whom I was particularly fond*. He was, at least, a fairly engaging guy, with a recognition in him that he was not a senator—he didn't need to be a senator for the money—he was financially secure—and the no-hour round trip each week was no thrill, but he loved the cut-and-thrust of parliamentary debate. He was good at being a senator, although only to a point: when aircraft manufacturers would ask him what he did for a living, he used to give vague answers, such as "I'm in the public service." It was a mixture of experience and expedience: he couldn't bear the finger-wagging and lecturing he was inevitably subjected to when he admitted to being employed in partisan politics.

That disdain for politicians was something that Jean Chretien was determined to change when he became Prime Minister in 1993. For awhile, he led in the unwelcome parade to bring a professional politician was a quality that numerous opponents admired. Which is why it's so unfortunate that the PM's concern to endow on such a respected man more—and why the year ahead looms so large. As our new chief columnist, our main journalist and CBC anchor Peter Mansbridge, points out on page 34, disenchanted voters register their unhappiness in a more worrisome way than in the past: they don't vote at all. The percentage of voter participation has been falling over the last four federal elections.

But a solution may be at hand. Increasingly, voters decide which party to support—if any—based on its leader, rather than by policy issues. The new major federal parties are choosing new leaders this year and, naturally, the Canadian Alliance, did select one. This marks a new opportunity for the House of Commons to renovate and reform itself. With one obvious irony: the attitude change toward politicians that the PM sought to achieve in 1993 can likely now be completed only when—and because—he leaves office.

Mansbridge, a few words—no need to say



A rookie columnist, but he knows his stuff

more about Peter, already one of Canada's most respected faces and voices, in his new incarnation in a columnist. Anybody who knows television news knows that the best anchors—like Peter—don't just read the nightly news, but also help shape its structure and content. That means working the phones regularly, and keeping their contact green. I can't count the number of times when, based in Ottawa, I'd bring into Peter—freshly returned from Toronto—and discover that he knew as much or more about the news taking place in the capital as did most of the full-time political reporters. In Mansbridge on the Record, Peter will use his first-hand acquaintance with newsmen and major events to provide an analysis of their content in the changing world around us.

Anthony Wilson-Smith

Special to Maclean's; also comment on The Editor's Letter

MACLEAN'S

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'Give your head a shake. Canada cannot afford another Marxist millionaire governing this country. We are still paying dearly for the last one.' —*CHRIS HARRIS, ONT.*

The son also rises

We certainly could use a visionary leader, an idealist/realist/charmer/dreamer/engineer. Perhaps Justin Trudeau will be this person or perhaps there's someone else ("Justin's time," *Cover*, Dec. 23) Canada continues to have great potential, but requires definition and direction. It's time we all started reshaping the firm that Canada has taken. The world stage is changing and so is our place upon it.

John Harris, Montreal, Ont.

A cynic—such as I, for example—might see in Justin's claim that his room is "warmer than my dad's" a calculated statement of a future politician, one who is quite aware that dead people don't vote.

John Harris, Montreal, Ont.

Thanks for the wonderfully inspiring, and odd article on Justin Trudeau. Guy or not (I for one hope he's not), I predict he will be prime minister in 15 years or less.

David Lissak, Hong Kong

The great news that Justin Trudeau plans to seek public office. He will then have the opportunity to rectify the problems created by his father. Trudeau senior dominated the Canadian Forces through financial strangulation, and yet is mostly responsible for the \$500-billion plus national debt, one of the highest per capita in the western world. Good luck, Justin.

Les Doyle, Surrey, B.C.

I would like to be the first to note for Justin Trudeau for prime minister of Canada. I believe he can and will lead this country into a far, far better future than any other warlike prime minister!

Edward D. Jones, London, Ont.

Justin Trudeau "wants to moderate" as with "pretty much the same" values as his father's. Do these values perhaps include the same thinly disguised contempt for his countrymen along with the same willingness to frivolously squander our tax dollars?



Canada is still laboring under a debt that is so a major disgrace his father's regrettable legacy. Enough Trudeau.

Robert Martin, Toronto

What kind of Canada could this nation become when this "prince" has marched into a "good king," a sovereign who leads with a wise mind, open heart, strong hand and a passionate soul? Might this be our return to health, happiness, peace and prosperity?

Gail Hillman, Vancouver

HE TAUNTS US STILL, FOR EVERY READER EXPRESSING EXCITEMENT AT THE PROSPECT OF JUSTIN TRUDEAU taking the plunge into politics, there's another horrified at the thought of any progeny of Pierre Trudeau assuming power. "As a voter, I will wait the days until Justin Trudeau is ready to lead our country," writes Karen Ballmore of Blackwood, Ont. "I am going to put this issue of *Maclean's* in a safe place so I can read it again in 30 years."

Typical of the less overwheeled is Rich Kerby of Haverhill, B.C. "Whatever Justin Trudeau to the world of Canadian politics," writes Kerby, "with the same single fingered salute his father gave the people of Salmon Arm, B.C., so many years ago."

Justin Trudeau's political ambitions may be worthy of a heavy pigskin costume, but not of a man seeking our highest office. It seems we saw through the cult of celebrity to observe what Trudeau really is: a vain man of few (if any) major accomplishments attempting to ride his father's coat-tails into history. We only need to look south to see what can happen when a political lightweight comes to power by family name.

Scott Andrews, Ottawa

Automatically equating a neo-generation soccer ball with Trudeau, Longford, Galt, Stansbury or Rogers, with leadership in empty, undemocratic exercise. Pray that the future dance of power in this country becomes more than just a pas de deux of patronage.

Alan Ross, Calgary

End of an era

Noticed, with appropriate wit, that the pages of *Maclean's* will no longer be regularly graced with the good doctor's glories ("Aloha now," *Doctor Forth*," *Peter C. Newman*, Dec. 23). So sad! Many moments of enjoyment reading the engaging assaults on some deserving (if white) tender parts might be a bit the worse off from a Dr. Forth literary lapse. Back on, good sir.

Paul Simpson, Toronto, Ont.

Dr. Forth wasn't always controversial, witty, clever, irresistible, capricious, disgruntled, xenophobic, leaving his readers' discomfort, inflated, aroused or bemused. There were those many times he was so funny witty and just a little bit nasty! We will miss him but he has certainly earned the title of "Thanks Dr. Forth, for the entertainment."

James Brown, Halifax, B.C.

Allen Petheringham added a dose, insight and humor to the Canadian scene in politics, economics, foreign policy and culture. I did not always agree with his point of view, but it made me think and think.

Uly Bernick, Saint-Jean-de-Gatineau, Que.

The gangs of Vancouver

I'm very happy that the gangster in our community has come out and said what a blatant obvious to those who analyze the comment as which East Indian mafia grow up ("The roots of gang warfare," *Essex*, Dec. 23). Being a young East Indian male, I believe the same set of principles that your



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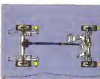
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article points to with respect to escalating East Indian violence. Our culture places high expectations on its youth, yet does not equip them with proper tools, such as work ethic and commitment, to help them achieve these expectations. It is perhaps that our community continues to turn a blind eye to these senseless killings.

Robert Babin, Surrey, B.C.

As a Sikh, I understand the background in which these boys are raised: free of responsibility, free of rebuke and with few role models. There are obviously no easy solutions. In the future, there is a fierce loyalty to family and friends, and a strong sense of self-pride. On their own, these are admirable attributes. However, when they are combined with guns and without role models, they can be the recipe for disaster. These young men must be shown they can choose a different path.

Arvin Murrells, Toronto

The Sikh faith is ultra-modern, progressive and very much against senseless violence. The majority of Punjabi living in Canada are from rural Punjab. Most have faced a harsh social and economic exploitation and human rights hardships in India. Many will do anything, even take serious risks, to migrate to Canada or the U.S. in search of better opportunities. When they land in Canada, they are confronted with many challenges of urban and western lifestyles. Many parents work 12 to 18 hours a day in search of a better financial situation, and meanwhile their kids are completely ignored. These kids are growing confused between many different values and identities. Many are getting their cultural education from television plus Indian videos (Hindi movies have no rating for violence and sex). Sikhs have lived in North America for more than 100 years, and that kind of gang violence is less than one decade old. So how can you blame Sikhism for this problem? These kids have no idea about Sikhism or any other faith.

Arshid Singh Kang, Vicksburg, Calif.

With friends like these

Scott Taylor should be Saddam Hussein's problem! "Longing for peace," Iraq, Dec. 23. If my avery clearly creates a scenario of the bad Americans (cowards all, clearly) and the good, peaceful Iraqis. As an American with



Leadership in regard to rid Vancouver's Indo-Canadian community of violence.

Canadian husband, extended family and property in Canada, and a regular reader, I am dismayed to see such blatant anti-Asian racism like in your magazine. It seems the U.S. truly has few allies in the world. Some think we should leave all of you to fend for yourselves. Ugh! Iraq, that peaceful nation that has caused so many casualties in the world to many times.

Johnnie Howard, Baton Rouge

The power of sex

Thank you for a wonderful article about young women crossing lives and families on their own ("Ladies not waiting," Life, Dec. 23). I am 27, single, independent and proud of it. I purchased my own home this past summer and have not looked back. To my extended family of aunts, cousins and other relatives in rural areas, if you are not married by 21, something is wrong with you. I have even had my sexuality questioned because I did not need a man in my life to "complete me." Why should there be anything wrong with recognizing priorities and focusing on getting things done instead of complaining my already busy life with the emotional roller coaster that is part of being in a relationship? Someday I may meet Mr. Right, but I am not about to put my life on hold until that day comes.

Tammy Gilmore, Quebec

I am one of those women who aren't waiting for the typical fairy-tale life to which we are away. Having become a single mother un-

expectedly at 16, I was thrown into having to grow up fast and be the best person I could be for my son. It was the best thing that has ever happened to me! Now my son is five and we have a beautiful home. I work for a fine company and we are very happy. With everything going so well, I have been looking at expanding our two-person family. I will be trying to conceive my second child by donor insemination in the new year. I only wish more people were accepting of this kind of alternative family.

Eric Hughes, Victoria

A plea to the press

I beg you, never again publish a column like Joanna Williams' "Taking the cake" (Over to You, Dec. 23). I understand the desire, and am now working on how to get her drunk over e-mail without losing a single glass cherry.

George Woznyk, Mississauga, Ont.

Getting the job done

Your article "Forgotten Vietnam" (Q&A, Dec. 23), about the Media Vietnam "gap" for compassion, made me proud to know William Woodward, if only through print. What a great sense of patriotism and duty. What was most impressive was his tremendous attitude when faced with adversity. No complaining, just went about doing what needed to be done. If anyone deserved a medal from his government for his service to Canada, Mr. Woodward certainly qualifies.

Donald E. Gray, London, Ont.



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What should we do when our neighbour goes to war?

- ☐ Offer our best soldiers
- ☐ Stand firmly by UN resolutions
- ☐ Send out an army of diplomats
- ☐ Sit on the fence

Watch. Then decide.

MACLEAN'S BEHIND THE SCENES



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 - fast-paced reviews of the latest computer and video games
 - convenient and easy-to-use tools for managing your subscription on-line
- [- extravaganzas like the MuchMusic Video Awards, the 2002 Toronto International Film Festival and the 2002 NHL Awards;
- profiles of unique individuals and records of unforgettable moments from award-winning, Chief Photographer Peter King's Famous Faces exhibit to the 2005 Canada Loves New York celebration; and
- chronicles of Maclean's covers through the years, Pierre Trudeau's early years in office, plus a modern look at New Brunswick's fabled covered bridges.](http://Macleans.ca also offers a unique visual panorama of Canadian images. Click on to the Photo Gallery to view:
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Whether you can't wait for your print copy of Maclean's to arrive, you're looking for an earlier article that you missed, or you're after some eye candy with substance, Macleans.ca is the answer.

For further information, contact behindthescenes@macleans.ca

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CAG Sudbury

Dates and times subject to change



10th
ANNIVERSARY

THEWEEK



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Alvin's MacKee
Ireland's most general
news raising for PC
reporting on grounds
his fellow Tories don't
want to see the night
in a row, calls their
morality "savage"
and says he doesn't
know "what they
are thinking"

Albuquerque Phillips
Sinking of sinking,
Bro. Ontario court
judge ruled that
percentage of usual
amounts of pot is not
illegal, at a time when
Ontario has been drag-
ging its heels, Phillips
for Terry Gilly's side

A Michael Brady
A perceptive, the
Report's men carried
to hours inside his view,
yacht to swim, with
only a few candles to
eat and his two dogs
to keep him warm.
Why to keep your cool

A Jordan Taylor
Lead story for the
Brandon Wheat Kings
turned the focus to
cheating as a member
of the Canadian junior
hockey team. Mattias
Johansson's "Boys" is
Carr's new chairman
of the board

Wendy Christian
Fresh update over
the fact that the PM
dropped automakers
from last of Kyoto-regu-
lated industries in En-
vironment. View, we're
talking the commu-
nity to that environ-
ment that severely

A David Anderson
The environment
ministry's role in
regulations capitated to re-
duce smog released
from new cars and
trucks by up to 10 per
cent. Automakers, I,
government, I

Hockey | Are the high-flying Ottawa Senators skating toward oblivion?

Skating near the top of the standings, the Ot-
tawa Senators are one of the hottest teams in
the NHL. But when the players were
summoned to a hastily called meeting last
week it wasn't to discuss strategy. Instead,
they were told their paycheck would be
late, and that the team, saddled under
a \$360-million debt, was on the verge of
bankruptcy after team owner Rod Bryden
had to refinance the club failed. But for now,
the players believe they will continue to be
paid. "I'm sure it will be straightened out
in a couple of days," said Ottawa forward
Steve Martins.

Bryden borrowed massively to put the
team on the ice in 1992, and debts have

continued to pile up. But Bryden thought
he had solved the club's financial problems
when he agreed to sell part of the team to
a limited partnership for \$186.7 million.
That deal fell apart when some of Bryden's
creditors balked at the terms. In an effort
to rescue the agreement, Finance Minister
John Manley, who represents the riding of
Ottawa South, phoned CIBC Chief Execu-
tive Officer John Haskins—Bryden owes the
bank \$40 million—but his intervention had
little influence. That left many fans believ-
ing the Senators would go under. "It's a mat-
ter of time," said Joe Roman as he arrived
for a game. "It's a good club, but Ottawa's just
too small."

The team is still
playing while
Bryden battles
to rescue it



Quote of the week | "Korea insists on its right to possess a technology used by the
United States to raze Japanese cities. Arabs need to learn the lesson."

The Iraq newspaper *Al-Bad* said of by Saddam Hussein's son Uday, calling on Arab states to stand up to Washington



DOWN BY THE SEA Crivels scoured the shore along Britain's Brighton Beach for pieces of wood to take home as souvenirs after a section of the West Pier collapsed on Dec. 25. There had been a local campaign to renovate the harbor's structure, which had been in a state of disrepair for many years, to raise it up to the standard of the main Brighton Pier.

More boncing baby clones

Cloned, the firm that claims to have produced the world's first cloned baby, said a second cloned human would be born—and three more are expected by early February. The announcement came over six years after the first alleged claim, a girl dubbed Eve who was born on Dec. 26, 40, and is to go ahead with DNA tests to see whether she is an exact genetic copy of her mother. Experts are skeptical the baby is a clone and worried the DNA testing is proof. Ben Hagine, president of Cloned, said the parents want to protect their identities and were concerned the firm hired to do the DNA analysis would reveal their names. Cloned was established in 1997 by the same man who founded the Quebec-based Racine club, which believes them landed on earth 25,000 years ago and started the human race through cloning.

Accused killer arrested

Chinese authorities detained a man accused of snatching a Canadian export to death,

after his ship ended into the Chinese port of Guangzhou. Ma Se Cheng, 33, was allegedly snatched during a fight with one of his sons in the wheelhouse of the MV Jin Ji on Dec. 27 and thrown overboard. The snatching, which occurred as the ship headed 100 miles from India, caused confusion because attack plans in international waters involved people of a number of different nationalities. Canada has asked China to take over the investigation.

Read the fine print

When it comes to diets, there's less of an information—and a lot of confusion. But last week Health Canada introduced regulations it hopes will cut through the clutter—and save the health care system some \$5 billion over the next 20 years as Canadians make better food choices. Replacing the previous voluntary system, the new regulations make nutritional labeling mandatory on all packaged goods. Standardized tables must list a product's calories and both the amount and percentage of daily intake of 13

key nutrients, including: vitamins, sodium, sugar and fat. This led to the energy-chugging, trans fat, an international fine. But critics who want to know about genetically modified organisms in their food were disappointed; the regulations did not require labeling of GMO ingredients.

Where there's smoke...

In an eagerly anticipated case, an Ontario Court judge in Windsor, Ont., dismissed charges against a 36-year-old boy homosexual by Kingsville caught with five grams of marijuana. Justice Douglas Phillips agreed with the son's lawyer, who said that there was effectively no federal law against having 30 grams or less of pot. (After Mr. Alford had argued that Ottawa had not yet adequately dealt with a ruling two years ago from the the Ontario Court of Appeal that the federal law prohibiting the possession of small amounts of marijuana was unconstitutional.) In this landmark case, the appeal court sided with a pot user who said the law violated the rights of sick people using the drug

for medical reasons. In response, the federal government enacted the Marijuana Medical Access Regulations, which allow use under certain circumstances. But the regulations, which went into effect in July, did not cover recreational use. Mr. Alford said that since the government didn't change the crime law properly, it was invalid.

Beers, Again

Monch's latest fireworks horror resulted in 28 confirmed dead and dozens of injured after a spark on New Year's Eve ignited boxes at the crowded Hidalgo market in Veracruz. The resulting inferno raged all night and by morning had consumed an entire city block. Many of the victims were indigent, and that, along with the fact the stores had burned many boxes beyond recognition, made identification difficult. Such disasters are frequent in Mexico despite tough laws to control them; illegal fireworks remain a popular way to celebrate holidays.

Down, down, down

After a brutal year of accelerating scandals, war worries and economic struggles, investors saw the world's stock markets launched a high of 2001–2002 is over. For most markets, it marked the third straight year of declines. Thanks to sagging energy and gold stocks, Canadian indices survived relatively unscathed, with the engines on "relatively." The benchmark S&P 500 composite index lost an exceptionally modest 14 percent.

BY SERGE CHARLEAU



A GLOBAL SENSE OF LOSS

Here some of the world's stock indices fared in 2002 (per cent change)

S&P 500 (United States)	+3.4%
S&P 500 (Canada)	+4.9%
Nikkei 225 (Japan)	-16.8%
S&P 500 (U.K.)	-21.4%
FTSE 100 (Britain)	-24.5%
Nikkei 225 (South Korea)	-31.5%

SOURCE: BARRON'S

Winnick crosses over

After naming the company he founded into the ground, Gary Winnick couldn't really do anything else but resign as chairman of Global Crossing Ltd. The debt-laden telecommunications services firm is in bankruptcy protection and the stock price is two U.S. cents, down from a peak of US\$64.35. Under investigation by securities regulators and facing class action lawsuits from financially devastated investors and employees, Winnick does have a new job—he sold US\$735 million worth of the company's stock before the final death spiral. As a parting gift, he donated US\$25 million to employees who lost money in the company's retirement plan. It was the least he could do.

Sex and the sense of smell

Sex is good for the brain, according to Samuel Weiss, a professor of cell biology and anatomy at the University of Calgary and senior

author of a report published last week in the journal *Science*. Research with mice shows that a hormone called prolactin, produced in females during pregnancy and breast-feeding and in both sexes after orgasm, stimulates the production of thousands of new cells in the brain. Those cells—which can develop into a variety of specialized cells—normally travel to the brain's olfactory cortex where they enhance the sense of smell. Weiss and others will now test whether prolactin injected into the blood stream can help repair damage done to the brain by strokes. The discovery also raises the possibility of treating degenerative brain disease such as Parkinson's, Huntington's or Alzheimer's.

Hot enough for you?

Global warming is forcing species to move into new ranges or alter habits in ways that could disrupt ecosystems, according to two new studies published in *Nature*. While some scientists debate the causes of global warming or what its long-term impact might be, the studies provide a clear picture of a biological world already threatened by global warming. In some cases, species' ranges have shifted 100 km or more in recent decades—mostly toward what were cooler areas. Both studies concluded the result of the changes in behaviour could be substantial ecological disruption, local loss of wildlife and possible species extinction.

History heads south

On May 28, 1914, Canadian Pacific's Empress of Ireland, enroute for Liverpool on the St. Lawrence River, came out of a bank and was hit by a Norwegian freighter. It sank in minutes, taking 1,462 passengers and crew with it. Quebec diver Philippe Beaudry has spent the last 30 years and, he estimates, some \$250,000 of his own money recovering hundreds of relics from the liner, from cups and saucers to its ship's bell. Until last month, a federal museum kept him from selling the collection abroad, but no Canadian buyer ever came forward—despite Heritage Canada's offer to put up half the cost. But with the museum's capital and a Hermitage collector eager to pay \$2.5 million, Beaudry received an expert permit last week—and the most complete collection of artifacts from the worst maritime disaster in Canadian history will soon be heading south.

Mansbridge on the Record



WANTED: NEW LEADERS

The country's political dynamic isn't very dynamic. Is it about to change?

TWO DAYS before Christmas, and the departure gate at the airport in Ottawa was full of big-name politicians that, in boarding began, one anonymous passenger was heard to grumble: "If this plane goes down, the 'also on board' list won't make it before the back page of the newspapers."

Here, for example, was Defence Minister John McCallum. Not far away, former external affairs minister Barbara McDougall. There was Senator Frank Mahaboo, the legendary "Big M" of hockey fame. And here, looking for his boarding pass, one-time finance minister Michael Wilson. Minister Mike Teeter was close by, while her husband Joe Clark was involved in the most intriguing scene. He was involved in animated conversation with fellow Tory Peter Mackay. It was an imagined "Tory pact"—and could it be the "Tory future"?

Now, before you daze off at the thought of so many politicians in one small space, stay with me for a moment. Here's why the Conservative leadership convention slated for May will be the second of a trilogy that will reshape the Canadian political landscape. The NDP convenes this month, and the Liberals in November. By then, Stephen Harper, now considered a nookie, will surely be the most experienced national leader (unless, of course, you count Gilles Duceppe of the Bloc Québécois as a "his nazi" leader).

For some, the prospect of all this change couldn't come soon enough. Something has happened to this country's political dynamic that suggests it isn't very dynamic at all any more. It's not just that Canadians hold politicians in low regard; they don't even turn out the way they once did to vote them in or out of office. Fifteen years ago, the national turnout rate was 75 per cent; by the 2000 election, that figure had dropped to 61 per cent—the lowest in our history. We like to think that voters who do turn out do so because they have studied the different policy positions

that anecdotal evidence points to leadership, not policy, as the deciding factor for more and more Canadians. The choice of leader affects how you vote and whether you vote at all. So what has this meant to the parties that want to govern this country?

First at the post at this year's race for a new face in the NDP. Not long ago, the NDP was a real force in the federal arena. In the 1988 election, it was sitting in second place in early polls. Some offices in 22 Broadway's office were so confident about the outcome that they used a line that conceivably election-time brigade in Ottawa: "We're considering career columns for Stornoway."

But John Turner recovered late in the campaign to build on the Opposition leader's residence, and the old campaign, for the Liberals, the NDP was left in third place. It won 20 per cent of the vote and 43 seats. A disappointment then—but what it would give for those numbers now. To try to get back in today's game, the NDP will choose in a few weeks from a slate whose front-runner is neither a soldier from the past and a relative unknown as the national stage—Jack Layton, a long-time Toronto city councillor.

The Liberals have only one candidate who is trying carefully—some say desperately—to stay out of trouble for 11 more months. All the time wondering how, if anyone, will be bold enough to try to in conflict with his own minister. And then there's the party of these two airport huddlers—Clark and Mackay. The "Tory leadership campaign has so far been defined not by big names jumping into the leadership waters, but by medium-sized names heading in the opposite direction. Does this sound like the way back to 75 per cent turnout? Be careful you don't get caught in the stalemate on the polls.

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Passages



MOVING ON: Olympic women's hockey team MVP, Hayley Wickenheiser, is trying out with a Finnish men's hockey team and was expected to start playing for the club on Jan. 11. The 26-year-old from Shawinigan, Que., would be the first woman who's not a goalie to play in a professional men's league. The team, Kiekko-Vantaan Lightning, answered in part by NEHLer Roman Selanne and is coached by former Boston Bruin and 20-million Oiler Brian Hargrave, who told reporters Wickenheiser guarantees the puck better than any player on the Lightning.

GO! Larry Utecht was a CFL all-star defensive back in the 1970s, and played for four teams in his six-year career. He went on to coach football at St. Mary's University, leading the Hawks to three Western Cup finals. Utecht, 50, was also a candidate for city councillor and deputy mayor. He died of Lou Gehrig's disease on Christmas morning.

MALINGUATED: Luís Inácio Lula da Silva, known as Lula, was sworn in as Brazil's first elected leftist president last week in front of 200,000 supporters—including Cuba's Fidel Castro and Venezuela's President Hugo Chávez. The son of a poor farmer, Silva, 57, won a landslide victory in October, promising to help the poor and hungry in the country of 170 million people—as well as fight corruption and corruption.

CHARGED: Meta-National Council president Gerald Hartz was arrested at a downtown Ottawa hotel on Dec. 11 and faces an assault charge (no details of the alleged crime were released). Moore, 42, apologized for his behaviour last week and admitted that alcohol played a part.

SEX: Celebrity photographer Herb Ritts captured famous images, including Madonna in Mickey Mouse ears and Jack Nicholson dressed as the Joker. His work was often published in *Vibe*, *Nylon* and *Rolling Stone* and he died of a heart attack while visiting video for Janet Jackson and Chris Rock. Ritts, 50, died of complications from pneumonia in Los Angeles.



The U.S. | Mixed messages

It was a week of mixed signals. On the one hand, weapons inspectors continued to find no trace of chemical weapons in Iraq—even as George W. Bush talked tougher about Saddam Hussein. On the other hand, Washington appeared to go softer on North Korea—suspected of secretly having the bomb, or being close to it. Last week, Pyongyang expelled United Nations weapons inspectors after the regime decided to restart a nuclear reactor that could be used to produce weapons-grade uranium. But Bush toned down the rhetoric, saying he hoped China and South Korea could persuade North Korea leader Kim Jong Il to drop his nuclear

program. "I believe this is not a military showdown," the President said last week. "This is a diplomatic showdown. I view the North Korean situation as one that can be resolved peacefully."

Not so, apparently, with Iraq. The United States stepped up its plans for war by preparing to send more soldiers to the Persian Gulf (there are currently 60,000 U.S. troops in the Gulf, a number expected to double in the coming weeks). And Bush continued his attempts to build case against Saddam, claiming that if his regime was left in power, the danger could become an attack on the United States by terrorist groups like al Qaeda.

North Korea, meanwhile, hoped to take

Anti-American demonstrators stage a massive protest rally in downtown Seoul.

advantage of a wave of anti-American sentiment sweeping South Korea, vowing for more warm contacts with its northern neighbour—and support in its rivalry with Bush. Relations between the U.S. and South Korea's president elect, Roh Moo-hyun, have been tense. Elected on Dec. 18, Roh kicked during his campaign to distance himself from Washington—a major headache for the Bush administration, given that South Korea has always been a reliable ally. U.S. Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly plans to visit South Korea later this month for talks aimed at re-establishing better relations.

U.S.) According to some reports, the five are believed to be part of a larger group who were issued false identity papers for the U.S. after coming to Canada from Pakistan via Tehran. Others say they arrived at Toronto's Pearson airport in mid-December, claiming refugee status before being smuggled into the U.S. through the Ambassador Motorway, a route straddling the Ontario, Quebec and New York state borders 70 km southwest of Montreal. Canada's Solicitor General Wayne Easter would not confirm that the RCMP first sounded the alarm, but hinted Canadian police work was pivotal. "The tremendous co-operation between our law enforcement and security intelligence agencies made it possible to give the U.S. administration better leverage in terms of protecting their international security and also us protecting ourselves," he said.

Despite the role played by the RCMP, the incident again raised concerns in the U.S. over its "leaky" northern border and Canada's commitment to security. FBI sources in Washington told *Maclean's* the U.S. has known for more than a year that use or abuse of human smuggling rings have been illegal moving people from Pakistan to Britain and then on to Canada. Some of the illegal immigrants stay in Canada, while some are transported on to the U.S., they said. While the FBI has no proof that the terrorists have ties to terrorism, there are enough connections between an alleged, Pakistani criminal underground and al-Qaeda to merit suspicion. "Al-Qaeda may have some facilities, they may use these same ferry operators," said one source.

Pressing calls to tighten security—and perhaps needing a wake-up call to divert attention from its own intelligence lapses—the Bush administration appears set to use the incident to renew its focus on Canada. And U.S. administration officials said they were preparing to establish a special commission on the Canadian border that could lead to even greater delays for both visitors and goods entering the United States.

The pressure for governments to take action is also building in Canada. Last week, Ontario Minister of Public Safety and Security Bob Runciman warned that the impact of a greater U.S. clampdown on the border would be catastrophic for the economy. He estimated that one extra million jobs in Ontario depend on open access to U.S. markets, which account for 53 per cent of the



Writers report security measures, including checks of all baggage, closed long lines

province's exports to goods. And the U.S. has reasons to worry about Canada's ability to protect its interests in its backyard, Runciman added. There are thousands of and several hundred refugee claimants entering Canada monthly, and Runciman said they choose to come here "because it's known worldwide they can come in, obtain refugee status and slip into society."

Runciman urged Ottawa to co-operate with Washington to create a security system under which whenever both countries would be screened abroad. As for people who land in Canada without valid documentation, "they should either be turned around and sent back, or they should be in a secured unit such that once we can assure ourselves that they pose no risk," he said.

There may be more pressing reasons than the economy for Canada to clean up its refugee admissions system, say terrorism experts. David Harris, a security analyst who was former head of strategic planning at CSIS, says two decades of a virtual open-door policy for refugees has allowed terrorists and sympathizers to take root in the country. The very majority of refugees are peaceful and only seek a better life for themselves and their children, Harris says. But a significant minority bring their ethnic and

religious hatreds to their new land. And some have Western values, not just American, he adds. "We signed anything we do in security in terms of having a good neighbor to the U.S., but we feel more that we're also being targeted," Harris says. "If the U.S. somehow manages to brand itself as a target, I have no doubt some extremist group may look to undermine a mass destructive attack against a country like Canada."

At this point, Runciman and Harris have few adversarial federal U.S. officials. This fall's speech from the Throne gave only a passing mention to security, and having already passed legislation giving authorities greater power to detain suspect refugees, among other measures, the government believes it is doing its part in the fight against terrorism. Short of an attack on Canadian soil, Harris sees little chance of changing the government's mindset. "We've got a naive view that since we're a multicultural, live and let live society, how can any body hate us?" he says. But the history over two weeks' possible border breach suggests Canadians who suspect we are open to charges of being soft on terrorism. And that, perhaps for many New Year's to come, will be weighing the crystal ball discarding on Times Square with an equal measure of anticipation and trepidation. ■

With William Gaudet in Washington



STILL MISSING THE MARK

The federal government wanted gun owners to register by Jan. 1. Many didn't.

UNDER BILL C-68, the Firearms Act, all Canadian gun owners were supposed to register their weapons or declare their intent to do so by midnight, Dec. 31. Too bad the National Gun Registry couldn't handle the pressure. In the days leading up to the deadline, its telephone lines were overwhelmed, and its Web site failed under heavy demand. Now, as many as two million guns remain unregistered, and the registry, which was to cost \$2 million to create, will now require \$1 billion to become operational.

Many opponents of the legislation have simply refused to register. Last week, some 250 people gathered on Parliament Hill to protest against the registry, which they say will never function properly and contravene their constitutional rights. "It's time

we said, 'We're not afraid,'" declared Jim Turnbull, the head of the Canadian Unarmed Firearms Owners Association. "Canadian citizens are made criminals just because of a piece of paper."

Turnbull, 70, a retired accountant from Jasper, Alta., who owns more than 25 guns, was arrested when he brandished a scanner—an awkward part of a handgun—during the protest. As he was led away, the demonstrators taunted police with cries of "Bharose." A smaller protest took place in Edmonton, where former Alberta separatist Warren Dene Lacombe, 74, carrying an unregistered .32 rifle, led a few dozen protesters

Arrested in Ottawa, gun activist Turnbull said his protest was a symbolic success

to the legislature. "I will not submit to this dangerous law," he told the crowd.

While federal politicians did not respond to the rallies, David Austin of the Canadian Firearms Centre, which administers the Firearms Act, said the demonstration was conducted by a few well-known pro-gun lobbyists, and said the number of protestors has dwindled over the years. But even though the Ottawa turnout was small, Turnbull argued that his protest was successful symbolically. He was, after all, arrested for carrying a weapon at a public gathering, and not for possessing an unregistered gun. "They're not arresting me for not having a licence," he said. "They know that the Firearms Act does not make us safe and that is the point I want to make." ■



Avril's Edge

The small-town Ontario teen, writes **SHANDA DEZIEL**, is moody but grounded as she negotiates stardom

"TO UNDERSTAND ME you have to meet me and be around me. And then, only if I'm in a good mood—don't meet me in a bad mood!" Avril Lavigne, the 18-year-old pop sensation from Niagara, Ont., says this the first time I meet her. It's early December, and we're in a Buffalo hotel room, a few hours before she's to perform at that day's *100% ANITA*. Turns out Lavigne is in a foul mood on this particular day: Her face is heavily visible behind the long hair and heavy eye makeup she has a headache, is jet-lagged and hungry, does not want to go to the sound check and, worse, doesn't want to be interviewed. In general, "I find the promotion—all the interviews, photo shoots, the press—the annoying part," she announces.

Now I'm nervous. And sure enough, things go less than brilliantly. As she lies on the hotel-room floor, Lavigne doesn't have a whole lot of interest in being reflective. What kind of impact did moving from Niagara to New York to record her album

have on her? "I didn't really focus on it that much. I just got there, and it was like, 'OK, these work to do.'" Did the expect success to come this fast? "I don't know. I didn't really think about it." How has she adjusted to fame? "Most of the time I don't really think about it. I just focus on what I have to do—go to the venue and sound check, off to the city, that city." How is she handling negative press? "Negative press sucks, so I don't think about it." What are her plans for her second record? "I'm not thinking about it right now. I don't want to freak myself out." And what about the money? "It's not really an issue for me. It's how I make my living, whether I make 100 bucks or a million bucks—it doesn't really matter to me. As long as I have a house and food and am happy."

Is she happy? "I'm doing what I wanted to do, I'm not flipping burgers." Here she takes a long pause, sighs, crosses her arms across her chest and says, much less than-enthusiastic, "Yeah, I'm really happy."

But Lavigne already became a spoiled rock 'n' roll diva who considers it her right to cruise through an airport? She's certainly

Lavigne balances being a role model for kids with a tendency toward rock rebellion

rich and famous enough for that. But after witnessing two concerts, watching her and her band's intense backstage antics, and grabbing some more one-on-one time which yielded brief moments of unrestrained conversation, a couple of smirks and even one hearty laugh, I'm ready to give Avril the benefit of the doubt. She's probably just a typically moody young person—likeable when she's up and trying what she's doing. Her celebrity doesn't seem to have hit her, but what has struck is the teenage blues. And she has to contend with them in that pressure cooker known as pop stardom.

Her debut album, *Let Go*, hit shelves last June, and only seven months later it's sold over eight million copies worldwide. It was the second best-seller of 2002 in the U.S., after *The Eminem Show*. The first two singles, *Complicated* and *Skater Girl*, went to number one, while her latest, *No Telling You, Is It*, is at number 10 and climbing. And there are more radio-friendly tracks to come. Lavigne will be able to ride off her debut for at least another year as she goes on her first headlining tour in Europe, Asia, Australia, and North America.

Meanwhile, against a backdrop of hyper-sensitized stars like Britney Spears, she's emerged as a mambogirl, skateboard-testing alternative for both boys and girls. Jennie Goodman brought her 12-year-old daughter and 10-year-old son to a recent *Radio* interview show. "There's not that much you can hang them on these days," she says. "But Avril you can. She doesn't throw all the 'truly lyrics.' Lavigne is well aware of that status, and it makes her uncontrollable—rock rebellion and aggression, she says, a big part of who she is, and she's sick of being a non-threatening. "There are a few times when I'm a bit careful," says the singer, whose language is liberally spiced with the F-word, and who speaks with bravado about getting into bar fights. "But I am not going to hide who I am or change who I am."

It took the singer only two years to leap from the stages of country fairs to a global success. Not surprisingly, Lavigne is obsessive and pulled in many directions. "I do worry about her stress level," says her step-aunt, mother, Judy, 47, who describes Avril as normally sociable and full of energy. Judy and her husband, John, a 49-year-old technician for Bell Canada, have two other kids: Matt, a 19-year-old college student, and high-schooler Malin, 15. They

admit that if Avril were having trouble coping, she might not tell them. Like most teens, she's not terribly communicative with her parents. "I find it frustrating that it's hard for me to get hold of her," says Judy. In fact, she says they rely on the Internet to get news. They've missed a couple of TV speeches because Avril didn't tell them, and John read into a magazine that she'd met Eminem (one of his favorites). "I'm on Avril, you have to tell us a little more," he says, before adding, "but we try not to bug her."

John and Judy are heartened that their daughter now has a personal assistant, Shannon Reddy, courtesy of her current management, Vancouver powerhouse Narmack. Reddy recognizes that due to Lavigne's age and megalomaniac star, this new assignment requires both a strong hand and a light touch. "She's out here with all guys," says Reddy. "She needs someone." And while Lavigne admits to not getting along well with girls, she and Reddy, 33, were fast friends by the end of their first week together—they'd already gone to a spa and had a pajama party. More important, Reddy is determined to create some free time during which Lavigne can pick up her guitar and write new songs.

Reddy, who has worked for Lili Fini and was there when Sarah McLachlan garnered international attention as 28, says she's impressed by how well Lavigne, at 18, is coping. "She's amazingly grounded. It hasn't worried me for her yet." Take money, for example. Reddy tells of how they were in an airport and Lavigne ordered a sandwich. After she asked for a couple of extras, like a soda, the woman working behind the counter said, "You know that'll be extra, don't it cost \$6.98?" As Reddy tells it, Lavigne said, "Forget it, no, that's two meals." After all, she had just spent \$4 on freshly squeezed juice. "I think," says Reddy, "she needs to see something on paper that shows her exactly how much she has."

According to her parents, Lavigne does know how much she's worth. (She signed a record deal for a reported \$1.5 million and got a publishing advance of \$1.4 million.) "She's always been a saver," explains Judy. But John goes a step further. "She's a tight wad," he laughs. "I'm sure Lavigne. A while ago we went by a BMW place. I said, 'You could get a convertible.' I was just teasing her but she got so mad and told me, 'Dad, I just want to get a used jeep.'"

As far as John and Judy can tell from the



like time she goes to spend at home, their daughter hasn't changed much. She looks her miniature schemer: Slim—who wears a tie in homage to Lavigne's first fashion statement (which she saw endows in favor of camouflage everything). She still orders pizza from downtown Niagara's La Pizzeria. On the menu is Avril's favorite, topped with pepperoni, olives and mushrooms. Now that she's a quasi-vegetarian the orders

without the meat—and instead of eating it that like she did in high school, she gets it to go. She still goes to the 24-hour A&P in the middle of the night for tofu. And she still keeps the family awake all night while she plays guitar and sings in front of the mirror. "She's still a teenager," says Judy. "We have three teenagers. We go through a lot of changes and mood swings."

While Avril is bored by questions about

how she got her start, her parents are happy to fill in the blanks. When she was five the family moved from Belleville in eastern Ontario, where all the kids were born, to Niagara, pop. 5,000, 40 km to the east. It's generally a farming town, big into sports and country music. There, the family attended Daniel Temple, where Avril sang solo in a Christmas pageant when she was 10. "They really had no choice," says John, "she hogged

"I do worry about her stress level," says her mother, Judy, back home in Niagara.

the mike anyway. She had such a big voice." Avril then branched out to studio gigs like a Canadian Tire celebration, holiday parties, an insurance company Christmas game, country fairs—choosing new country numbers by Ruth Hall and the Dixie Chicks. "It was a lot of work," recalls Judy. "We got her a sound machine with environmental sound effects for her to sing along with, she practiced constantly. This we'd get to the event and have to buy our own harmonies on. But it's all kind of coming together." John adds, "Now it's stuck in New York."

Avril made the jump from local entertainer to recording artist soon after she won a 1999 contest to sing with Shania Twain in Ottawa at the Caled Centre. The following year, while in New York, she catches the attention of L.A. Reid, head of Arista Records. Impressed by her confidence and a voice that was strong and versatile despite a lack of vocal training, he signed the 18-year-old immediately—and she promptly dropped out of high school. At first, Arista gave her new country material to record, but turned out that Lavigne wasn't that more interested in rock. Eventually, she was sent to Los Angeles, where a couple of different writing teams took her by the hand—about eight boys, being small towns and being an outsider—and added addictive rock/pop hooks. The result, *Let Go*, is a slushy Montreal mix, slightly marketable land of skate-girl pop.

Good natured and devoutly Christian, John seems both exasperated by, and proud of, his daughter's rock 'n' roll persona. He wishes she wouldn't talk about drinking in interviews, but recognizes she's 18 and has to experience things for herself. He calls her a prodigal. "She can stretch out if she wants to. If she didn't have this [career] she'd be in more trouble than you can shake a stick at." But when asked about her self-perpetuated reputation for fighting, he says, "I don't think she looks for fights, but she can hold her own if she has to. She's had enough of those in hockey."

At age 10 and 11, Lavigne played in a boy's league in Niagara. "One time," John recalls, "the two teams were coming off the ice and I saw that you know there's a great big commotion and I saw that kids were pulling kids out, I went to the dressing room drinking. 'What that resembled that started

that" and turns out some gay called one of Avril's managers fat pig or something and Avril slapped him right in the mask. So she started it." She also played baseball and was a pretty good pitcher. In Grade 10, she also covered skateboarding. While John proudly shows off the Nipawis skate park where Avril learned to ride, he says that with it came boyfriends with baggy pants "I did n't like them much."

The only thing about Avril's image that seems to really offend her parents' religious sensibility is her first mouth. But they'd be happy to know she's learning to tone it down. At the recent show in Buffalo, consisting of an older teen crowd, Lavigne and her rhythm guitarist, Jesse Colburn, traded obscenities, turning the rock level up a notch. Two days later, Lavigne got on stage in Baltimore and looked out on a sea of no- to 12-year-olds, wearing no, sitting on their fathers' shoulders and passionately singing along to every single word. "It's the youngest crowd we've seen," said Lavigne's personal security guard, Joe Self, before she went on stage. "I hope this helps her understand what a role model she is." That night, not a bad word was uttered. But when compared to the Buffalo performance, in which Lavigne owned the stage, exultated and pushed her voice, in Baltimore she lacked energy and seemed bored when straggled of the rock posturing.

Network supplied Lavigne with a touring band that's likely to take her in an edgier direction. While many solo artists are backed by seasoned players, most of Lavigne's musicians had barely made it out of their teenagers before being thrown onto the world stage. Colburn, 21, and drummer Matt Bevan, 22, had been part of the Apex, Ont., punk scene, playing with the guys from Closet Monster and the hot band Sum 41 (page 28). Bassist Charlie Martin, 22, had been in a Burlington, Ont., punk band. And lead guitarist Evan Taubenfeld, 19, from Baltimore, was in a rock group. "She's young, her music's young, we needed a band that would fit well with who she is as a person," says Lavigne's manager, Sharon Gold. "Maybe they're not top-of-the-line studio musicians, but they still play really well and have the right energy and the right look."

It was the right decision. What's keeping Lavigne from getting a big head is that she wants to be treated the same as the guys in her band—and they're not stars. These are

toed, pierced, Converse-and-work-pants-wearing dudes have been hired for a professional gig. They didn't make it big with their own groups, they lacked into an opportunity of a lifetime and know they are easily replaceable. They show up a time and slowly nurse only a beer or two before the show. In Buffalo, they laugh at the glass-topped table they find in their dressing room—explaining to Lavigne that other bands would use it to meet coke off. With no illicit drugs in sight, this band heads straight for their food table, which is loaded with veggie and soy snacks. Colburn and Bevan are vegetarians, and now Lavigne is flirting with vegetarianism too. Things are pretty chilled out backstage. Before the show—the roadster it gets is a competition to see who can do the most Charlie Chaplin heel looks in a row. Lavigne trips and falls constantly, and ends up getting teased.

After years of the jet set life, including traveling to Europe three times, appearances on *Jay Leno*, *David Letterman*, the *Billboard Music Awards*, *MuchMusic Video Awards*, and visits to the L.A. premieres of the Eisenstein movie *A Mille*, what Lavigne and the band years for is a real tour, with buses and the actual rigors of the road. Until now, they've flown everywhere. At the Buffalo show, the first thing they do is check out the tour bus of Quebec band Simple Plan, which looks on the bill. "They travel like real musicians," says Martin, adding disbelievably, "we travel like Hollywood stars."

Later, Lavigne looks to Bevan for his opinion of Simple Plan. "So do we like those guys?" But whether businessmen may act, at times, as her cool, becomer and musical muses, in matters of importance they defer to Lavigne, her most radical. Lavigne often licks about her boys. "They are going through everything with me, so I don't feel completely by myself." But guys in general is a topic that plagues her income. She doesn't have a boyfriend right now, but wants one—and hopes to eventually marry and have kids. "The world thinks that me and Deryck [Whibley] from Sum 41 are together," she says, laughing. "Derek's off—er Me and him are just friends, we hang out. But anyone we hang out I either go in a fight with somebody or end up in a tuboid. Something happens every time." Besides the guys from Sum 41, Lavigne anytime doesn't know name other famous boys. And when she goes to Hollywood-type events she finds



"I don't write at this stage, I feel like I need to be hurt. Usually I'm angry at guys."

that celebrities don't talk to one another. "How do you f---ing meet people? No! I think that me out of all people—but I never meet anybody. Even though I'm all around the world, I'm all over the place, whenever, I'm so sheltered at the same time. I got into situations, have a security guard with me, I go right to the hotel, to the venue and I come right back. I don't go anywhere public."

What's maddening, and justifying, about Lavigne is that she's way more comfortable chatting about boys, shopping and fishing than she is talking about her music. That's the complete opposite of most artists, who clam up about their personal lives and steer everything back to their craft. Lavigne's reluctance to talk shop might be an indication that she is overwhelmed by her success, that she's scared to death of a follow-up album, that her career is controlled or manipulated by the record company. But a less cynical view would be that she's just a teenager who's bored of proving herself. "The image out there of me," she says, "isn't who I am. I can see how it could, for some people, look like the label made me up—this chick who wears a tank top and a tie. Whatever, I think the image is way too f---ing pop, it doesn't show my whole realism and my rock, edge side."

It's true Lavigne likes to look out more than many of her female contemporaries, but she's a long way from the likes of Courtney Love and Patti Smith. Lavigne's a parent-friendly, drug-free rock to go along with the messages of what her mother calls a "sensative" kid. "She was always writing at little notes," says Judy. "Dear mommy and daddy, I love you and I miss you." John says he kept the letters she sent him while he was working in Ottawa during the 1990s. "I let one of the guys I was working with read them, and he cried."

Now her intimate musings are gospel to millions of young girls. But Lavigne doesn't think about that too much. "My lyrics," she says, "are just what I'm feeling, like if I'm pissed off or hurt. I don't write if I'm happy. I feel like I need to be hurt. Usually I'm angry at guys or something. Every guy I've ever been with has always made me angry." Avril Lavigne seems to have fallen into another bad mood, but maybe when it comes to her career that's not such a bad thing. ■

Abrasive in Ajax

This small community, writes JOHN INTINI, is a hotbed of punk rock, with Sum 41 calling it home

AT FIRST GLANCE, Ajax, Ont., looks like any other small Canadian town. Chosen of cookie-cutter houses, rows of strip malls and more than a dozen doughnut shops line the landscape of the bedroom community about 45 km east of Toronto. But in the past couple of years, a side of "the Joe" has emerged that many locals didn't realize existed. Thanks to the success of five musical exports—most notably Sum 41—this nondescript place is becoming known as more than just a pit stop for Highway 401 travellers in need of a large double-decker bus. Ajax, as strange as it sounds, has become the punk-rock capital of Canada.

With a second, it has town of 76,000 people really the latest-day Canadian equivalent of 1970s London, where the Sex Pistols first spread their message of anarchy? When you ask any member of the bands from Ajax, they laugh at the thought that their hometown is at the vanguard of the current punk resurgence. "It's a misnomer," says Steve Jones, 21, Sum 41's drummer. "It's boring and has nothing for young people to do." Glenn "Chico" Dunning, from another Ajax band, Not By Choice, agrees. "Ajax is just a bunch of houses, strip malls and schools with nowhere for bands to play other than their own garages," says the 25-year-old guitarist. "It's a place where every kid was in a band at some point in their life and some of us just got lucky."

Yet the impact of a handful of Ajax natives on the North American music scene has been pretty amazing considering the town's size. The four, plus ready-to-roar members of Sum

41 have spent the last couple of years on the top of the music charts with their blend of punk and high-energy pop. Sum's 2000 debut release, *All Killer no filler*, has sold three million copies and brought the quintet worldwide fame. The band's recent follow-up, *Don't Think I'm Left*, has already gone platinum since coming out in November. Meanwhile, Sum's success has helped open the door for fellow pop-punk artists from Ajax. "When Sum 41 broke onto the scene there were very few record labels at all in the local shows in the Durham region," says Mark "London" Spicokuk, vocalist and bassist with punk band Closet Monster. "The music labels were searching for the next big thing out of Ajax." So far, Not by Choice (signed with Geffen Entertainment) and two members of Anti-Flag's back-up band, also from Ajax, have cashed in.

But why Ajax? Alan Cross, host of the nationally syndicated radio documentary *The Graying History of New Music*, says the town is a perfect incubator for creativity. "A substantial amount of rock 'n' roll music came from big cities," says Cross, a native of Hamilton. "Ajax is a great example of a place that can be a hotbed for teenagers who need to find their own list. Many choose to head around with guitars in the basement and at parties, and they realize how great it is when all of sudden they're getting girls and drinking beer all the time. Then, two or three chords and a lot of an attitude later they have a record deal."

Another explanation is the Chameleon Café. Every weekend during the mid to late



'90s, hundreds of teens gathered at the Chameleon—a converted auto-body garage at the industrial part of town—to watch local bands. "The music scene in the entire Durham region was great for a few years," says Daryck Whiskey, 22, Sum 41's front man. "It was a highly competitive environment with about a dozen bands. We all pushed one another to play better music."

Geoff Nori, lead vocalist and guitarist for the band Treble Charger, agrees with Whiskey. "The Chameleon was something most other small towns and cities didn't have," says Nori, a native of South Sea, Marie. "Another important factor was how close these guys were to Toronto. They could go to the concerts of punk bands like Lagwagon and NOFX [both from California]. It al-

lowed them to say into the punk scene when they were only 12 or 13, which is years before most decided to shut down the venue two years ago, and new venues opened for bands to play better music."

Nori discovered Sum 41 about five years ago after meeting Whiskey at a Treble Charger show in Oshawa. Now Sum 41's manager, Nori took the four guys under his care and provided much a time for them to record their first few tracks. Last spring, he teamed to Ajax again when he was asked to put together a gritty backing band for soon-to-be-repessor Lagwagon. "The first

thing I did was ask a couple of guys from Ajax that I met through Sum 41," he says. "One thing that set the guys from Ajax apart was that they were writing their own songs from a really early age. Most high school bands just play local clubs and cover whatever bands they're into. These guys would do covers but also write a lot of their own stuff. Their maturity as artists at such a young age was incredible."

Initially, three of the four musicians in Lagwagon's band ended up coming from Ajax. One of the guys Nori picked was Spicokuk. His band, Closet Monster, had performed recording in second, self-produced full-length album, *Killed the Radio Star*, and Spicokuk was short on cash, so he took the gig. He ended up spending six months with Lag-

wagon before deciding he needed to get back to his band. "It [the band] was a real band used by the system, and I needed to do my own stuff," says Spicokuk, 23. "It was also a type of music that wasn't really my style."

Closet Monster finds its stuff on playing true to its punk roots. "I love when the screaming girls pile up in the front of the stage expecting to hear a hard-core Sum 41," says Spicokuk. "It really shocks them when we think around, across our heads off and try to cheer their little minds." In fact, many of the other bands find it strange that they're even labelled punk. While Sum 41 and Not by Choice sound second on stage like normal punk bands, they play a much softer brand of punk. "We're the real punk band out of Ajax," says Spicokuk, who is living back home with his mother and sister. "A lot of the other stuff is pop or mall-punk. We're the only band that really has something to say. And screaming girls can really ruin the vibe of a good show."

While some might think it a bit misguided, Spicokuk's position is understandable. He has been playing punk music since he was 15, and the most important thing for him has always been live performance. Closet Monster proved this in the two months leading up to Christmas by playing 40 shows in small clubs and bars in Southwestern Ontario and Eastern Canada. "Punk means you up," says Spicokuk, who comes with his bandmates in an old, rundown van. "You have fun and you love it but you realize that you haven't made enough money to pay rent but then you have to realize that's not the point. It's about spreading the message." Part of this quest includes Underground Operations, a punk music label Spicokuk created for bands to work together. "There is a real brotherhood in the punk community," he says, "and I just felt this was a way to help the scene develop."

By some accounts, the music scene in Ajax is tiny. Two full years on the pop-Chameleon scene, Nori—who says he was never entirely convinced the town was a punk capital anyway—says he doesn't think current Ajax bands "have the same chemistry. It really comes down to finding a group of friends who have a lot of the same values, memories and goals," he adds. "It's hard to know why, but for a short period of time something really meshed with a bunch of guys in Ajax and it led to some really incredible music."

THE HOLISTIC OIL BARON

EnCana's Gwyn Morgan is no Stetsoned stereotype, writes BRIAN BERGMAN

BY HIS OWN ACCOUNT, the most powerful man in Canada's oil patch is, at heart, a simple country boy. Gwyn Morgan, president and chief executive officer of EnCana Corp., the world's largest independent oil and gas producer, traces his core values and philosophy of life and business to his modest upbringing on a hardacre grain and livestock farm near Carleton Place, Ont. The youngest of four children, Morgan, now 52, remembers, at age 13, helping his 90-lb-hen father dig a ditch from the well to the house that finally brought the family indoor plumbing. Like most farm kids, his day began with two hours of chores—milking the cows, feeding the pigs, collecting eggs—and ended much the same way. "Around our house, there wasn't any cooing," he says. "It was simply expected that you do your part—and do it well." Besides instilling a strong work ethic, Morgan says, his parents passed on lessons that have guided him ever since. Among them: "Keep your word. Stay honest. Do your best. If the world deals you a tough blow, buck up and move on."

Morgan has certainly moved on. As recently as 1998, Peter C. Newson's *Titans*, a 600-page tome on "the new Canadian establishment," made only passing mention of him as a "promising corner to watch." Well, the promise has been fulfilled; the "corner" has arrived. By engineering the April 2002 merger of two oil and gas behemoths, Alberta Energy Co. Ltd. (which Morgan helped establish in the 1970s and had headed since 1994) and Petro-Canada Energy Corp., the former's activist-turned-a position of relative obscurity to someone who routinely commands attention on the national stage. Morgan shows every sign of making the most of it. In a recent flurry of high-profile speeches, newspaper op-ed pieces and letters to the Prime Minister, Morgan has sounded off on everything from political and corporate corruption to what he describes as the "truly flawed" Kyoto Protocol. And he has done it his way, with a high-octane none more often heard than droned thru in the corridors of conscience.

Take his performance at a black-tie dinner in Toronto in November, where Morgan received the 2002 Ivey Business Leader Award, an honour bestowed annually by alumni of the University of Western Ontario's Richard Ivey School of Business. In his acceptance speech, Morgan lamented that some no longer draw a link between a leader's personal and public conduct. "For example," he said, "I recently had an animated dinner argument with a New York Times columnist who argued that Bill Clinton's personal ethical transgressions, which include adultery and lying, were of lesser importance compared with his economic achievements as president. Needless to say, we agreed to disagree, profoundly."

Morgan went on to criticize both business and political leaders for basing too many of their decisions on shortsighted yardsticks—for the former, overnight stock quotes, for the latter, public opinion polls. "The Old Testament," he intoned, "gave the world a universal truth: 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' I believe it is time for Canada's corporate and political leadership to go back to the Bible. Allegorically at least, until they get this message straight."

The impression left is of a holy roller out to unite the unrighteous. But, as is often the case with Morgan, the stereotype doesn't quite fit. During a wide-ranging interview at his executive offices in downtown Calgary, Morgan is asked about his religious views. "I live with the idea there is a greater force at work in the universe, and celebrate that," he says. "But I haven't found it any of the conventional religious, fully satisfactory explanation. I'm kind of like a pre-Martin, pre-Christians, pre-Jewish person."

He is often described as 'intense' and 'driven.' He begs to differ: 'I think I'm one of the more balanced people in the business.'

Remember when they all said there was a God and all worshipped the same one?"

AS MANY have remarked, Gwyn Morgan doesn't entirely resemble Central Casting's image of an oil baron. Slim and bespectacled, he speaks so softly that a listener sometimes has to lean in to pick up what he's saying. The ardent free-enterpriser could easily be mistaken for a government bureaucrat—perish the thought.

Morgan surprises in other ways. He is an advocate of holistic medicine, not a common oil-patch preoccupation. EnCana is the primary corporate sponsor of the Integrative Health Institute, a Calgary-based non-profit organization that promotes resource information and counselling on blending modern medicine with such traditional practices as acupuncture, meditation and herbal remedies. But this is no parable and intense exercise. Morgan wants to create a model for how people can take more responsibility for their own well-being and help contain spiralling health-care costs. "What we have in this country is an illness management system, not a health-care system," he says. "We need a more preventative approach and there's a lot of knowledge accumulated over thousands of years that can help in this regard."

Morgan's holistic bent is tied to another private passion. He is, as friends and associates freely assert, a "fitness freak." Morgan walks (or, more accurately, strides) to work from the downtown luxury condo he shares with wife Pat Treister, a fellow Carleton native and long-time oil and gas consultant (the couple have one daughter, Jennifer, 24, from Treister's first marriage). He dedicates a minimum of one hour a day to a vigorous cross-training regime which includes running, skipping rope and an upper-body workout. He also estimates that he's hiked, cycled, canoe and stood literally thousands of kilometres through remote stretches of British Columbia, Alberta and the North.

Morgan is often described as "intense" and "driven." He begs to differ. "Given my lifestyle, I think I'm one of the more balanced



people in the business," he says with just the hint of a smile. "What I would say is that I've focused. Whatever the task is at hand, I zero in on it and give it my undivided attention."

No argument there from those who know him: Dick Haskayne, chairman of both TransCanada Pipelines Ltd. and Pording Inc., first met Morgan in the 1970s. A long-time board member with Alberta Energy Co., Haskayne was instrumental in the appointment of Morgan as CEO in 1994. "He's a very intelligent and impressive fellow," says Haskayne. "He can cut through the issues to get to the end point quicker than most people." Martin Molyneux, managing director of institutional research for the Calgary-based investment dealer FirstEnergy Capital Corp., puts it more bluntly: "Gwyn has very low tolerance for bullshitting," he says. "He doesn't do it to others and he doesn't expect people to do it to him."

Under Morgan's leadership, AEC, which started out in 1973 as a provincially owned Crown corporation, transformed into what Molyneux describes as "a lean, mean, corporate machine." Morgan shed many of the company's assets—including international timber and mining—to concentrate on the oil and gas sector. He engineered a series of hostile takeovers (Morgan prefers the term "unolicited friendly offers") and built AEC into Canada's second-largest petroleum producer behind Talisman Energy Inc.

Morgan's nose for the main chance surfaced again in October 2001 when he heard about the abrupt departure of David Tarr as chief executive of PanCanadian, the recently spun-off energy unit of Canadian Pacific Ltd. Morgan initiated backdoor negotiations with David O'Brien, the former chairman, president and CEO of Canadian Pacific who had replaced Tarr as an interim boss at PanCanadian. The result was a \$131 billion friendly merger that created EnCana, an energy powerhouse with massive holdings both in Canada and around the world, including the American Rocky Mountain states, Ecuador and the North Sea.

While the deal was technically a takeover of AEC by PanCanadian, it was clear from the outset that EnCana would be very much Morgan's baby. Molyneux notes EnCana has almost entirely absorbed the aggressive, demagogic corporate structure championed by Morgan at AEC. "Gwyn gives his people a lot of latitude to execute a busi-



Oil-globed warning, says anti Kyoto Morgan. Both sides make fervently convincing cases.

ness plan," says Molyneux. "But if you say you are going to do something, you better do it. He's a wonder for making people keep their promises."

MORGAN doesn't court controversy, but the amount of his outspoken convictions and the scope of his business empire ensures he attracts more than his share. In 1998, AEC became one of the targets in a spate of bombings and vandalism at oil-field sites in northwestern Alberta. "We're Ludwig, a farmer and a preacher, claimed four gas wells, some of them owned by AEC, were poisoning his land and his family. Ludwig, who was later sentenced to 25 months in jail for five offences, including bombing one gas well and vandalizing another, once explained to Morgan "sometimes I think we should take [him] hostage, tie him up...and then let him loose."

At Ludwig's trial, it was revealed that, in building their case against Ludwig, the RCMP had staged a phony bombing of an abandoned gas well which owned by AEC, a tactic reminiscent of the flower's dirty tricks

campaign against Quebec separatists in the 1970s. Morgan insisted, then, as he does now, that he acted properly in co-operating with the police. He also laments that, in some quarters, Ludwig continues to be regarded as a folk hero. "What sort of principles do people have," he asks, "to idolize someone who resorts to a form of terrorism?"

Morgan became immersed in a different kind of dispute in 1999 when he resigned as chairman of the Alberta chapter of the Canadian Olympic Foundation, where he'd helped raise \$300,000 over the previous four years. He did so to protest corruption within the International Olympic Committee. Morgan then shifted AEC's support to an anti-lobby organization co-founded by Olympic gold medalist swimmer and Calgary native Mark Tewksbury. "We approached everyone we could think of to help us push the reform process," says Tewksbury, who now lives in Montreal where he is taking on his own 2006 Gay Games. "Gwyn was the only one who stepped up and really took a personal stand."

More recently, EnCana has come under fire from several lobby groups, including Oxfam and the David Suzuki Foundation, because of a \$1.7-billion pipeline: En-

Canx and its partners are building through an ecologically sensitive area of the rain forest in Ecuador. Morgan maintains the criticisms are unfair and unsubstantiated and says the company is determined to "leave the environment in Ecuador in better shape than we found it." He blames the controversy, in part, on radical activists who oppose all oil and gas development. "There are environmental groups we can work with," he says, "and those we can't."

Morgan's pitched battle, along with other industry executives, against the Kyoto accord has also put him at odds with many environmentalists. He has argued that Ottawa's rush to justify the international accord, which sets strict targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2012, is a globally divisive, potentially devastating to the Canadian economy—and will do nothing to improve the environment. Like many others, including Alberta Premier Ralph Klein, Morgan advocates a "made-in-Canada" approach to reducing emissions in a manner that won't destabilize the economy. Morgan also believes there needs to be much more debate about whether greenhouse gas emissions are causing global warming, or if it is part of a natural cycle of the earth's warming and cooling. "I've listened to scientists on both sides of the issue," he says, "and both make terribly convincing cases."

Such views are a red flag to people like Robert Horning, policy director of the widely respected, Alberta-based Pembina Institute. "Morgan doesn't understand the consensus of scientific opinion on this issue," says Horning, "and significantly overstates the economic damage and gloom." All the same, Horning credits what he calls "the big propaganda campaign" by the Alberta government and corporate leaders like Morgan for Ottawa's announcement last month that it will cap the annual industry revenue pay to meet the Kyoto targets. "They've succeeded in having a lot of the burden shifted off their shoulders," says Horning. "It will be individual Canadians who pay the price."

Morgan does, in fact, sound much more sanguine about the accord these days. "Now that it's been ratified, maybe we can be less political and more rational about thinking," he says. "Canadians want to all to work together." Oxfam, and many other firms, the former fears big companies to be a player—anyway equitably while wielding a very big stick.

HE MAY NOT

WALK ON WATER, BUT...



The work of this researcher may well prove priceless. What heaven knows, we could all use a hint. How about a planet with pristine lakes and rivers, for example? Or a secure supply of clean, safe drinking water? Thanks to research conducted by scientists and engineers from across Canada, this might not take divine intervention.

Dr. Kerry MacKenzie of the University of New Brunswick is busy looking for ways to monitor and improve groundwater quality. These would amounts of everyday substances—gasoline, solvents, pesticides—can significantly pollute our water. MacKenzie, who is co-director of UNB's Groundwater Studies Group, and his graduate students are developing and applying numerical models to understand how these contaminants travel and behave. Scientists and engineers can use this information to help assess the severity of a crucial source of drinking water.

Of the 12,000 earthwise scientists and engineers whose research is funded by NSERC (the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council), here are just a few of the many others who are getting their test run on research related to water quality:

Susan Allen (University of Waterloo) / Jean-François Blais (Université de Québec, INRS-Eau) / Christian Boisson (Université Laval) / Chandra Chakraborty (University of Calgary) / Graham Gagnon (Dalhousie University) / Samir Gossain (McGill University) / Paul Hargreaves (University of British Columbia) / Arshad Ali (University of Regina) / Peter Leung (University of Victoria) / James Nival (McGill University) / Jan Oelze (University of Victoria) / Pierre Payard (Université de Québec, INRS-Eau) / John Szei (Queen's University) / Jiaoping Wu (York University)

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2003: BETTER FOR STOCKS

Canada should do especially well, and worries about deflation are overblown

I APOLOGIZE in advance for writing a column with any outlook for 2003. Why? Because strategies have been doing it for years and nearly everyone has been doing it badly. It has become an exercise in futility.

When January 2000 arrived, the sell-out deliriously optimistic forecasts for next year, and not just the decade, but the whole century (I am not aware of anyone who came up with a bullish forecast for the entire new millennium, but the price/worth optimism on Nasdaq was 35:1, before stock option.com was introduced). Adding them, the total y/e was near to 600 times earnings, which meant the index was discounting earnings to the year 2040. A long time, to be sure, but it still left 450 years in some kind of secular black hole. It was, therefore, a tad childish of me to suggest that the Paul Pipers, Shills and moonie-bucks who were telling us to buy technology stocks were discounting everything but the Second Coming.)

The new millennium has not given a good account of itself to date. Global stock markets are down 40 per cent or more, the once robust global economy seems to be on a technical limp, support systems, there's a war on Terror, and the secular paradise of North Korea may be heading toward nuclear missiles.

Based on the 1990s, it was, for most forecasters, amazingly easy to predict a roaring bull market in the year 2000. Based on the three years of this new era, most forecasters have found it increasingly easy to predict a roaring bull market in 2003 and beyond. How's that going?

How can the same prognosticators optimists who said in Mayday was headed for 10,000 when it broke (just barely) through 5,000 in 2000 now tell us that we can forget that temporary anomaly—the best bullback to less than 1,200. It is not, repeat not, a sign that technology stocks were overvalued. It is nothing more than a brief unpleasantness—no, a belch at a funeral.

According to Merrill Lynch strategist Richard Bernstein, who watches for value in

the market and also watches his competitors, they have never been more bullish. That is enough to make the abominable choose to override it on New Year's Eve.

Although I am in that company, I am going to make a few predictions about '03 that I hope will prove modestly durable.

I believe this will be the first up year for global stocks of this new age. Canadian stocks—particularly dividend-paying and commodity stocks—should have quite a good year of it. U.S. stocks will face greater challenges, but they should give modestly positive performance. Just when you gave up watching your RRSP members, it may be time to start scrutinizing them anew.

Why? Because, at long last, powerful deflationary forces have emerged to challenge the deflationary forces that have been gaining ground since the mid-1990s. Here's the list of challengers to the big, bad deflationists:

1. Monetary central banks, including the Federal Reserve, the European Central Bank, and even the Bank of Japan, have awoken to the deflation threat and are loosening money supplies and slashing interest rates. Deflation and easy money are uneasy partners.

2. The War on Terror looks noble long and cooperative. Warm and deflation are extremely uneasy partners.

3. Commodity rallies are on a tear, led by oil and gas and gold. By some measures, that is one of the broadest-based commodity bull markets since the early 1980s—when inflation was the only thing we feared. Deflation and commodity inflation are a head-of-partners.

These are the big forces, but there are

two other, less significant signs of a change in the wind.

4. Stock prices globally may have reached their lows. Technology's crash in successive plunges—the Triple Whammy—will annoy us for decades, but it need not keep the rest of the markets in anguish. A runaway bull market may or may not contribute to inflation, but a runaway bear market is assuredly deflationary, because it drains wealth from the system.

5. Most governments outside Canada are running big deficits. Although deficits are not in themselves virtuous progenitors of inflation, they help to offset deflationary forces.

The most important change is in monetary policy. Unless the global banking system responds to central bank easing, then deflationary forces will continue to gain strength. The Fed has finally understood that the mere printing of paper currency is not providing economic stimulus. Can the banks do their part to feed off deflation and revive the economy?

There seems to be a good chance of just that. What is unique to this cycle is the strong relative performance of bank stocks worldwide (outside Japan) during the long bear market. As far as I can tell, there has never before been a bear market accompanied by recession in which financial stocks outperformed the broad market indices. I'll differ on this. I don't find this encouraging just because I had far a foreboding of a major Canadian bank. What this means is that as money supplies grow, the banking system can be an engine of economic growth, because it isn't in some systems' trouble.

That banks collectively seem to be good financial health, compared with earlier cycles when they were reeling, does not imply that this generation of bankers is composed entirely of geniuses whose first fear been wisdom. (This attests to Paul Walker's global reflexion known as the Basel Accord, to which nearly all significant global banks must conform. This introduced a rational just ice for bank balance sheets, and it seems to be working nicely.)

If the money is moving and the banks are moving, it and commodities are booming, not even the world's low cost mega manufacturer, China, can impose deflation on us. Not yet.

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'WE'RE NOT THE NFL'

The CFL's new chief wants to add a team—in Canada

TOM WRIGHT might have turned and run at the day he was supposed to be announced as the new commissioner of the Canadian Football League. It was during Guy Cyprien in Edmonton last November, and the announcement was embarrassingly delayed for a day because of mishaps among team owners—Wright once heard it was black's doing it for the money. He earned far more as head of Portland, Ore.-based Solomon North America, part of the Adidas empire. Near the glory in 2001, he turned down an offer to head the Canadian Olympic Committee. And though the league has regained its footing after nearly collapsing in the mid-1990s, it still has big problems. But the 49-year-old Vancouver took the CFL job anyway, and he recently explained why to *Nation's Sports Editor* James Dossou.

You left one of the toughest jobs in sports marketing. What makes the CFL attractive?
I think you need balance in your life between work and family, and when I was in

the States I didn't have that. My family was here in Toronto, and I was commuting, and I really missed the connection to the community and the ability—hopefully, over time—to make a difference with the one life we have. The job is unique opportunity to have a portion of leadership in a business and in a league that is very much part of our Canadian culture. I love sport, I love our country and I want to live here.

Did you have second thoughts when the announcement was handled so poorly?
If anything, it strengthened my resolve. I knew this was going to be challenging, but I think it's important that you try your best to match your skills and experience with what you plan to do. And I have some experience and leadership skills that hopefully will allow me to deal with these things.

You followed the CFL as a kid, then lost touch in the '60s and early '80s. What happened?
I was one of those lost generation fella. I

would get interested during the playoffs with the Grey Cups, but I wasn't as rabid and mad a fan as I was in my youth. I think there's a bunch of people who, like me, perceive an opportunity for the CFL, in such cases to be rebounded.

Can you rebuild fan support in weak markets by attracting disaffected boomers?

It's a two-pronged approach because we also have to make sure we're relevant to younger fans. Part of that is through the family connection, but we also have to promote our heroes, and do a good job of enhancing the in-stadium experience. Selling tickets is a performance-driven business, and if you look at how well Edmonton has done over the years, the Alouettes in Montreal, Calgary, you'll see it all mixed with a foundation based on excellence on the field.

What are the top items on your to-do list?

Not necessarily in this order. First, we have a TV contract that expired on Dec. 31. Both TSN and CBC have been solid partners throughout the five years. Having said that, we have to renegotiate a new contract—it's our single largest source of league revenue.

Number two is the development of a strategic planning process that will allow us to set common goals for where we'd like to be in five years. We're not the NFL, that has a billion-dollar TV contract, so it's important to focus on what we are and not what we aren't.

What about expansion?

There are strong business and quality-of-life issues tied to an balanced schedule. And right now, at this time, we don't have a balanced schedule. So it's really important that we look to add a 10th team, and ideally it's in the East. I think Halifax or some other Maritime province would be terrific. There are other options—Quebec City, Lowell, Windsor or London. I feel very strongly that the league is a Canadian league, so while I'm the commissioner I would be hard pressed to see a move south of the 49th.

In recent seasons, enforcement of the salary cap has slipped. Do you plan to get tough?

The notion of a level playing field is important, particularly when you've got stars around where you've got mid-level players. It's not a huge market. How to make it? I haven't figured that out yet.



DREAMS OF ESCAPE

In this eclectic prairie town, not all is as it seems

UP FROM THE VALLEY, the highway rolls through the low golden hills of southern Saskatchewan. Moose Jaw resides in the rear-view mirror, and the telephone-pole flag post as though carried on a conveyor belt. Overhead, military planes scream by. Snowbirds on manoeuvre in a vast and empty sky.

And then I see it, coming up quickly on my right, and even though I have been watching for it, it still comes as a surprise: a deep-headed ship on the open prairie, an ocean-going vessel amid the farmlands of a landlocked province.

It is propped up with steel supports and the name on the side reads DONTANEN, but this is a mistake, an error made during restoration when the letters, now bleached and faded, were read incorrectly: she is the *Saskatchewan*, "strong barbed," and she is a testament to the will of one man.

Tom Saskanen was a shipbuilder from Finland who first arrived in Saskatchewan in 1911. He came on foot, having walked 1,000 km from Minnesota in search of his brother. Saskanen had migrated to the New World at the age of 20, had married a Finnish girl and had tried his hand at farming. They had four children—three daughters and a son—but life was hard and they struggled just to get by. The soil was poor, the work was long.

Saskanen's brother, meanwhile, had gone north to Saskatchewan, where first land sold backfired, and Tom decided to join him. He promised his family he would return for them, and then set off on his long walk, carrying everything he owned on his back. It was over six feet tall and weighed 289 pounds, his strength was legendary. Saskanen found his brother and found a claim on a nearby tract. He worked hard and lived frugally, and by 1915 he had managed to save \$9,000—a remarkable sum in that time.

After a seven-year absence, he returned to Minnesota—on foot again. He arrived

only to find that the farm had been abandoned and the fields overgrown. His wife had died in a fire epidemic and his children had been scattered, sent into foster homes. Saskanen was able to locate only one of his children, a son John, and together they slipped away and started walking back to Saskatchewan. Just a few kilometers from the Canadian border, they were intercepted by U.S. authorities and John was returned to foster care.

Tom Saskanen was nothing if not stubborn and he set out again on a second attempt to get his son, but this time he was stopped before he could even make contact. He was deported from the United States and drove east with jail if he ever returned. He never saw his son again.

After a trip to Finland aboard a freighter, Saskanen returned to Saskatchewan with renewed purpose. He was going to lower the prairie behind him. He was going to build a ship and sail away. Saskanen purchased a set of maps and charted his course: down the South Saskatchewan River, through Cedar Lake and Lake Winnipeg, into the Nelson and then onward to Hudson Bay. From there, he would round the northern tip of Quebec and return back to Finland in a grand style.

It was a good time to leave. The crops had failed, the fields were parched, and the bread-baker of the prairie had been turned into a dust bowl. The Great Depression was an era of almost biblical hardship: plagues of grasshoppers, the endless drought, the dust storms. The land was dry—bone dry—and the tropical blow away.

Mullin was obsessed with the tale of a crazy Finn who thought he could sail out of the dust bowl and cross an ocean

Amid the heat and drought, Saskanen began to build his ship. He worked relentlessly. His neighbours could hear his hammer echoes across the stubbled grass, they could see the glow of his forge against the night sky, and they whispered in disgust, proving terms about the "Crazy Finlander." He was a shipbuilder trapped in a land without water. But he was building a vessel. And he was going home.

Year after year, he hammered away, refusing to yield. He rolled the steel for his boiler by hand and he forged his own rivets. Slowly, in sections, the ship began to take shape: two cabins, four and a half, a watertight hull, and a deep tapered keel. Saskanen was now a wild figure, a hermit of the grasslands, emaciated, darkened with soot, misanthropic and unkempt. And still he pushed on, even though he was now in his 50s and his health was deteriorating. When he went into town for supplies, the shopkeepers would ask him what he was doing. "There is a great flood coming," he replied. And he was going to catch that flood and ride it all the way back to Finland. . . .

But Tom Saskanen never made it home. Some would locate his place while he was out, stripping the ship's superstructure and knocking it apart, and in the process, they managed to destroy years of Saskanen's life. A tattered, shattered man, he never recovered. It was only a matter of time before they took him in. In 1941, he was committed to a psychiatric ward in North Battleford. He died there two years later.

Saskanen's ship lay in pieces in a farmer's field for more than 30 years, his life's work reduced to little more than a rumour, a tale of a crazy Finn who thought he could sail out of the dust bowl and across an ocean. He would have been forgotten entirely, too, had it not been for Laurence "Moon" Mullin, a farmer northwest of Moose Jaw who chased down the various scraps of rumour until he found the ship itself.

In 1992, Mullin arranged to have the ship



was assembled and recounted. At Tom Saskanen was obsessed with the ship, Moon Mullin was just an observer with Saskanen. He only did Mullin find a home for the *Saskatchewan*, he should have a small chapel because it is Saskanen's memory. Soon after, Saskanen's body was moved from North Battleford and buried next to his ship. A single white dove marks the spot and the speech on the base reads the below words simply: "Tom Saskanen, Shipbuilder."

I CAME TO MOOSE JAW for all the obvious reasons to visit Al Capone's Canada, to see the man who had transformed the dry into an open-air art gallery, and to travel in the quiet and historic "cathedral" of Joyce's Antiques & Old-Fashioned Confectionery, a sort of miniature Victorian railway, suspended from the ceiling. I rode the bus

trolley and soaked in the moose-woman art "Tropicana Corridor," an oasis on the prairie.

As this list of attractions suggests, Moose Jaw is one of the most eclectic, if not downright eccentric, travel destinations in Western Canada. It is a prairie town in the best sense of the word, even if a good deal of it is a mix of fact and fiction (madhouse of fact with great dollops of fiction).

The cash can at Joyce's are antiques. The novels are not. They are "creative reconstructions," built solely for tourists as urban myth-made manifest. There had been whippersnappers' hideaways and underground laboratories concealed beneath the streets of Moose Jaw since the days of Prohibition, and these legends were given a boost in 1980 when a marble suddenly appeared, revealing a brick-lined chamber below. Was it a water cistern? Or an old sewage vault? Or was it part of a long lost

clandestine, subterranean world, one that had been rife with gothic girls and gangsters, Tommy guns and raincoats? In the absence of evidence, the imagination roams.

The more complex lies to suggest that the original novels were built by Moose Jaw's Chinese community (which came as soon to Moose Jaw's Chinese community). Supposedly, the Chinese in Moose Jaw were driven underground by repressive persecution, where they covered below the city's streets, raising their families in "100 invisible dens"—something that is not supported by even a shred of evidence. After the Chinese were pushed out, the hoodluggers moved in. Supposedly.

The notion that the Chinese in Moose Jaw were forced to live underground is a myth, but the Al Capone underground does have a bus on railway. Moose Jaw used to be the terminus for the Side-Lite that ran

scents & sensibilities

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south into the United States, and during the days of Prohibition the city became a haven for bootleggers. They called it "Lafayette" and it was regularly denounced from the pulpit and press as the "San city of Saskatchewan" and "the Sodom and Gomorrah of the prairies," which, of course, only added to its allure. It was a raucous place. River Street was a swirl of brothels and booze cars, and with the provincial capital just down the river, Moose Jaw became a very real red-light district.

Did Al Capone ever actually visit Moose Jaw? The odds are slim. But booze did flow across the border, the local chief of police was corrupt (or, in the very least, "radical"), and there are rumors about the city's streets.

It's true. They may not be part of the official story, but in several buildings downtown, there is evidence of passageways and mysterious doorways that lead from one basement to the next. Were these really the hide-out garages and gunbers? Or are they simply old utility tunnels, built to give access to maintenance workers? Or were they both utility corridors that were later used for illicit purposes? The town's geography certainly leads us to think so. (When the tourist tunnels were being built, the owners of these real passageways declined to have them incorporated into the tour. Which is a shame, because they would have added at least a hint of authenticity to the entire experience.)

Travelers of Moose Jaw are all in good luck, but to understand this part of the world, you would do better to follow the tunnels of Moose Jaw behind and drive south 10 minutes on Highway 2, down to where a ship sits in the heart of the prairie.

To see the silhouette of the Sentinel against the white Saskatchewan sky is to confront something very deep in the heart of who we are. Beyond the ray-streaked images of propaganda-billed posters noting the promise of a Last West "What, Canada was founded in much on heartbreak as on romance."

The isolation. The awful distances. The crushing loneliness. There's a yearning, an ache—deeper than nostalgia, stronger than regret—within us somewhere south of Canada's past and which informs so much of the immigrant experience, especially here in the West. It's the dream of escape, the dream of flight.

Al Capone's supposed tunnels are 'creative reconstructions' built only for tourists: an urban myth made manifest

Tom Salterton passed away, peacefully and forgotten, on April 23, 1943. While he was intermentational, the drought ended. The stars opened up and the heavens poured down, the streams flooded and the Saskatchewan River rose high, brimming with water, flowing towards the sea.

BACK IN MOOSE JAW, I trucked down Moon Mallin, the man who had fought so hard to save the town. Mr. Mallin is 92, but still full of vigour. A one-time newspaper boy, he claims to have been recruited as "a tunnel crawler" during Prohibition.

"Oh, there were tunnels all right," he says when I suggest that the day his single-track still life into a coastal stream. "There were tunnels, but you wouldn't have been able to have seen. They were only two or three feet high, most of them. I was small enough that I could crawl through."

As I turned around, Mallin says he ran messages and warnings of imminent police raids up and down the main line passages, from one gambling den to the next. "I didn't tell Capone directly," says Mallin. "But I did make it one of his henchmen, Diamond Jim Brady. He had the coolest, most colorful eyes you ever imagine."

After a long, lively discussion about bootleggers and big game, strong arms and "tunnel dogs" (prisoners), I change tack. "Why Salterton?" I ask.

"Why did it matter so much to Mallin? Why had he devoted such a great deal of time and energy to preserving the memory of one man's failed dream? A man he didn't know, had never met. "Why was it so important to you that the Salterton be saved?"

And damned if Mallin's eyes don't well up. "I have always tried to set someone out for life," he says. "Tom Salterton didn't do anything wrong. He wasn't a crook. He just wanted to go home."

Salterton's story is told elsewhere, but has been told in 24 countries and in languages including Finnish.

Columns | MARY JOHNSON



WHAT'S A WAIT WORTH?

Politicians are dodging one of health care's biggest issues: waiting times

THESE ARE always reasons why something can't be done. And provincial health ministers don't just sit back in 2001 when they pulled federal proposals to track waiting times for medical treatment. These are, they argued, different ways to measure the interval between the need for your treatment and the actual surgery. For that matter, how could they be sure the exact same procedure was being measured? Poorer provinces grumbled about being compared with their wealthier brothers. Quebec argued that Ottawa's very suggestion constituted interference. The clock was ticking. Statistics Canada needed to know everyone had agreed so it could start to gather waiting time data. Many provinces secretly hoped to make that deadline.

The big war broke out several weeks when Ontario's health minister, the province's longest-serving, was exposed in a scandal of his own. He was accused of having misled the public about the number of people who had difficulty getting non-emergency surgery. The provincial reports on those, incidentally, and other waiting times and life expectancy, were released last September on the same day in the Speech from the Throne. Shortly after, several more provinces had to provide more data on 67 subcategories, the total number on was sketchy and incomplete. Never from the provinces promise to produce another set. In 2004.

It is astonishing. Last fall, two solid reports from the Senate social affairs committee and the Romanow Royal Commission—argued governments to tackle the atrocious state of wait times. Romanow's health panel, premier Roy Romanow's health panel, said governments should continue waiting and provide patients with an appropriate waiting time for their procedure, depending on the severity of their condition. It should be a goal for a first guarantee, arguing that provinces need to develop a set of measures to help, especially for

patients that waiting times should be set for particular conditions—and governments should pay for procedures to be performed where they were not available. So far, no one and provincial health ministers considering the publication of appropriate waiting times or the establishment of a care guarantee. Forget it. In the lead up to the First Ministers' conference on health care this month, they are too busy sparring about funding and jurisdiction.

When are they last? Last summer, Statistics Canada produced its first official look at access to health services, ranging from specialists to non-emergency surgery. StatsCan estimated that 4.3 million Canadians had difficulty accessing so-called "line" services such as family doctors, and 1.4 million Canadians had difficulty getting specialist care over a 12-month period. Most said waiting times in the specific problem, ranging from 25 per cent of those who had difficulty getting non-emergency surgery to 72 per cent of those trying to get a diagnostic test. Almost 90 per cent of those affected by delays in surgery, specialists, and other services, said they were not able to get the service they needed. And they were not able to get the service they needed. And they were not able to get the service they needed.

Ruby's two-part solution to this dilemma is striking. His committee says provinces should fund more hospitals through fees for individual services, instead of global budgets. Hospitals would then have an incentive to improve the quality and the speed of that service—or patients would go elsewhere and revenue would decline. Ottawa and the provinces should also develop a national set of maximum waiting times for procedures. If we don't have helped, provinces

should pay for care elsewhere. "Nothing else will ever force accountability on the people who own the system," says Kirby. "Our test says your health should not be determined while you are waiting. Holy crap, if you can't meet that, how can you have about having the best system in the world?"

If governments do not respond, the courts may do it for them. So far, at least, courts have not concluded that the Charter of Rights includes a right to health care. But there is a right to "life, liberty and security of the person." The federal government has notified that only governments can fund medically necessary services. What happens if citizens cannot access those services in a timely manner—and their health declines? In a C.D. Howe Institute report last year, Lauren Staley Harris and Patrick Monahan argued that such delays are inconsistent with the principles of fundamental rights—and violate the Charter. So governments must either provide timely care—or permit the existence of a parallel private system. "If we're going to maintain confidence in the way we say we want to maintain it," says Monahan, associate dean of law at Osgoode Hall Law School, "then we have got to have something like a care guarantee."

But will it work? In a recent study for the Institute for Research on Public Policy, University of Toronto law professor Catherine Flood and lawyer Thayer Flood examined how other nations handled the right to timely care. They found it was difficult to separate the effect of patient choice from other reforms—such as universal health care and Sweden where waiting times had diminished. But the two also clearly noted that if there were no incentives to maintain waiting standards, "the evidence seems to suggest that waiting lists and times will grow."

It won't be a try. Michael Decker, chairman of the Canadian Institute for Health Information, suggests provinces adopt care guarantees for a limited number of basic procedures such as orthopaedic surgery, access to MRIs and cardiac and cancer care. "I like the idea," he says. "It would give some power to patients in the system." Such ideas will likely be more grating opportunities for opposition parties such as the Canadian Alliance. Especially since today's ministers expect obedience to their real obligations.

Mary Johnson's columns appear every other issue. maryjohnson@maclean.ca

Some argue that delays violate the Charter. So the state must either provide timely care—or permit a parallel private system.



LOST HORIZONS

A railroad may destroy Tibetan culture

WILL THE 1,142-KM RAIL of steel from Tibet to its neighbor or bring millions of Chinese immigrants and destroy a unique civilization? Ever since Mao Zedong's army invaded the Himalayan kingdom in 1950, China has attempted to absorb it. A series of ragged roads led in to China's western provinces, but for years Mao's plan to build a railway to Tibet was thwarted by the harsh environment and technical problems, including blasting tunnels and laying track in mountains 4,000 meters sea level. But engineers finally prevailed, and in June 2001, construction began on the US\$2.4-billion line from China's western Qinghai province to Lhasa, the Tibetan capital. Chinese officials say the railroad, to be completed in 2007, will bring prosperity. But Tibetans fear their culture will be lost. "Look at all the Chinese people," said Lhamo, a Tibetan schoolteacher. "After the railway there will only be more."



Workers are sometimes starved for oxygen as they toil at extreme altitudes, blasting tunnels (top), the vast, windswept Tibetan plateau

The engineers involved with constructing the line must contend with mountains and rivers (above), even as Tibetans fear an influx of Chinese



THE HOCKEY PATIENT

Though I came to it late, the game has inspired me in my fight against cancer

HOCKEY AND CANCER. The words seem strange together, even incompatible, and yet, as the NHL's Mario Lemieux and Selva Kovic reminded me when they went public with their cases, sometimes the two words do meet in dramatic fashion. I know the feeling. And I guess I could hardly claim that Lemieux, Kovic and I are in the same league, at least in having hockey and cancer intersect in our lives.

The story of how I got drafted into the league as one wants to belong to begins with a confession. I never played Canada's national game as a kid. The first time I got off my dad's back and into the ice was in my mid-40s, and it was at a local outdoor rink in Toronto with my son, Jeremy, then a towering five-year-old. I loved the sounds of skates scraping the ice and the puck bouncing off the boards, but it was the seconding of father and son, each playing our first hockey game, that made that Saturday evening indelibly sweet. That first game went down with such jubilation for hockey. Unexpectedly, it also coincided with childhood leukemia for the game. I began looking for opportunities to play with kids my own age, but I had trouble finding a league that would not only tolerate my lack of experience, but perhaps even welcome what my wife worried to—my middle-aged blarney.

However, in 1997, when Jeremy was 8, I had other challenges that suddenly required my brand-new, doctor-dialed diagnosis: I was a man blood disease called Waldenström's Macroglobulinemia, a lymphoma-like cancer that turns blood into the equivalent of molasses. My blood count was such that a San Diego hematologist remarked that if I were going on Olympics for Waldenström, I would have been carrying a medal.

There was one other chemotherapy, which I willingly underwent to an NHL, after the disease left me gasping for breath, often while my legs turned to cement blocks. Other symptoms included numbness, the numbing of the feet and hands. Hockey suddenly became a dinner priority.

The bad news is that my disease is incurable. The good news is that it's treatable to a point, ensuring that some patients live many years while others don't.

Among those I came to befriend was Craig McCarty, the father of Darren McCarty, a scrappy player and Stanley Cup winner with the Detroit Red Wings. For more than five years, Craig endured multiple myeloma, a cousin to Waldenström, and in one of our chats, he masterfully laid out the details of his treatment, from full-body radiation to multiple chemotherapy sessions. "Where do you get your will?" I asked, exhausted just listening to his account. "I just think of my son and all he's had to go through to make it as the NHL," he replied.

Craig encouraged my renewed determination to grab life by the bit, but, as a friend noted, I'd hardly had a deprived life surgery over the years. I'd missed my childhood, missed my career, my family and my life. I'd nearly been killed twice in adolescent sports, but the fringes of dying in middle age of cancer had never occurred to me.

Still, I was haunted by the fact that my



major had died from breast cancer at 54 and I'd somehow wondered if I would beat her best friend. Last year, realizing I was gradually slipping out of the recesses that began in 1998, I turned to the wonder drug Rituximab. It brought me the energy I needed before the next treatment, and time to consider bone marrow or stem cell transplants.

This renewal of energy got me chasing my hockey dreams again, and I looked for a league that would welcome a 55-year-old rookie. Offspring encouragement was my son, Jeremy, now a skilled 13-year-old right winger. And so, last October, hockey and I finally got engaged in an ongoing, shivery league for guys with as least a little guy under their helmets.

When I got was asked to the team with the white sweaters a couple of times, I found comfort in playing for "The Dark Side," the guys who wore blue jerseys and rarely won. A couple of opposing players had been NHL drafters in their younger days and I came to call our guys "The Underdogs."

Driving home after one particularly grueling game, it dawned on me that in my preference for playing with The Underdogs had something to do with my cancer—a disease that forces you to face daunting odds against a formidable opponent. Moreover, in both hockey and cancer, the prospect of success is often dashed by employing strategy. After an in-depth read on the disease, I developed strategies I hope will help me live my motto, "2017 with an option to renew."

That year, my son will turn 12. I decided a new best friend was I'd chosen for my grandfather of the future Phil Henderson, and I wish hockey and with cancer, there's also the matter of command and teamwork. My hockey teammates were a motley crew: some were young, many were middle-aged and several were, by professional standards, unimpressive. But watching those unimpressive for the puck in the corners and use their energy wisely made me realize that role models don't come any better, especially now to a cancer patient searching for a role to keep playing as well as someone like me, a long and blessed outcome.

I've also had more fun than I've had in years. And I've been reminded that even when the odds are against you, you can still win, just as The Underdogs began to win as the season wore on.

Greg Stott is a writer and photographer in Toronto. To connect, email gregstott@me.com.



CLASHING UNTO DEATH

JONATHAN GATEHOUSE pays tribute to Joe Strummer

THERE'S A MAWNIKH black-and-white illustration of dead rock stars that is a staple of old shops, bad hair salons and subculture rockers across North America. Joni Mitchell, Janis Joplin, Jim Morrison, Buddy Holly and a host of other departed rockers are seated in a glass heavenly limo, playing on for all eternity. The most up-to-date version probably has Elton and John Lennon—some owners may even have placed in George Harrison recently—but the point, like a lot of pop culture, is limited to a cross of the baby-boom generation.

Joe Strummer wouldn't have wanted to be part of that club, even if the others would have invited him. The lead singer of The Clash, who was contracted last week after dying from a heart attack at age 50 on Dec. 22, was a powerful director of the logic of "being old first" who continue to rule the streets, and whose surviving members still find ways to put out new recordings of songs he had. He once said that it was "the last

proof" because the new Rolling Stones "that kept his head honest. And true to his creed, there were no \$300-a-ticket Clash reunion tours over the Riff Raff group disintegrated on the map of international superstardom in the mid-1980s, despite more million-dollar offers.

The Clash, who churchily belied themselves as The Only Real Band Matters, were born in the chaos of London's punk movement and tried to force playing less than that, in the words of one critic, "for the ground running and accelerated." Raw energy, trashy guitars, politically charged lyrics and catchy choruses, all knitted together by Strummer's grand old voice. They survived the explosion of the scene—Strummer once convinced hispanic from the spit audience was to rival their appreciation with—and prospered, moving on to base punk with reggae, rockabilly and funk, paving the way for countless imitators. The band never had a song that peaked above number 10 on the U.S. singles chart, but as double albums, London Calling, was judged

the most important record of the '70s by Rolling Stone magazine. Like Kurt Cobain and Nirvana a decade later, The Clash proved there was an audience for music that was outside the mainstream, even if main radio stations refused to play.

Compared to the hype that greeted the death of each member of the fading 1960s, reaction to Strummer's passing was low-key in North America. In Canada, only the *Times* to Star devoted less worthy of a front page story. The New York Times inadvertently put a picture of a different member of The Clash along with his obituary. All of that isn't a surprise, just an unfortunate demographic reality. The Stones, Elton and Santana were among the top-selling acts in Canada last year. Almost every city in the country has at least one radio station dedicated to "classic rock." Phil McCartney was the pre-game entertainment on the Super Bowl. But even if there are no 24-hour tributes on MTV or CNN, Strummer is being mourned by members of at least one generation. The Clash demonstrated that the power didn't lie in celebrity or money, but in the music. Hopefully now he's busy with Sid Vicious, Joey and Der De Roemer, and some other dearly departed, making those boring old films reach for the clouds.

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KINDRED SPIRITS INSTEAD OF KIN

For many adults, notes **AMY CAMERON**, friends have taken the place of family

WHEN IRENEA LOWES discovered she was pregnant, she was 34, single, working at a Toronto bar and residing in a downtown apartment with two friends. Determined to give her child some stability, Lowe bought a house in the cozy beaches neighborhood. She converted it into two apartments, and one of her closest friends, Amy Morris (whom she'd met 14 years earlier when both were working as cocktail waitresses), moved in upstairs. It was a friendship pact, after all: Lowe was born in July 1956, became a god-sister. "It was like a shared parenting thing for the first three years," says Lowe, now 52 and the owner of a successful car-rim biz, near, Kinross Square. "Amy became a very

large part of my daughter's life." Though Morris eventually moved into her own place, Irene, 56, still spends every second weekend with the women she calls her girlfriends. "With Amy and Irene," says Lowe, "that relationship will be forever."

The traditional family, buffeted by 40 years of social upheaval, is no longer a given for many Canadians. With many adults living for their own sake, and with the decline of marriage and other institutions, people are creating lives—admittedly—than just their mother, thus adhering to blood ties. Out with the family, in with friendship. Friends step up as mother in life's challenges. They commiserate over stressful fac-

ties, decisions for some, friendship fills a void left by a ruptured childhood home. For others, it's an additional support network when parents or siblings live far away.

Gerald Murray grew up as only child in the small community of Inland, B.C. "My parents never missed me like a child," he says. "We were just three people living together. When I went to other people's houses, they shared something in terms of sibling and relationships that I didn't have in my own family." When Murray left home at 17 to attend university, he discovered "family creation." He started spending holidays with friends, building relationships that have sustained him through several moves, jobs, loves and

the death of his father in 1998. Now the 50-year-old English professor, currently based in Tokyo, has what he calls a "global family" with girlfriends in Montreal, Vancouver and Sydney, Australia, and near Thredbo, N.S. "For siblings it is a great complement if you say they are like friends," he says. "But my friends are more important to me and play a greater role than I think siblings would have." This Christmas, Murray moved his two families—the Vancouver/Canada to spend time with his mother and brought her to celebrate the holiday at his friends' home in the Asian peninsula. "With our friends, we are exploring a bond that is more spiritual as opposed to organizational on a societal level."

Never is the decade of family more apparent than during the holidays. But for many Canadians, the festive season is a time when the decline of family is also evident. The last time Christmas Decima was home for Christmas was in 1994. An only child reared by a single mother in Inlet, B.C., Decima used to go back faithfully every year, but when she was in her 20s and living in Vancouver, she decided that the stress of the season and travelling across the province in winter wasn't worth it. "After the first Christmas in Vancouver, apart from my friends, the world didn't exist to me," she says. "It was fine." And though the joys of an extremely close relationship with her mother, Decima—now based in Toronto, where she works in an e-commerce program administration at Molson—persist to celebrate Christmas with buddies instead. "Friends are closer to me and I get along better with them," says Decima, 32. "You aren't allowed to cry, and there is a bond, but you choose to be with friends. It's a different kind of family." It's a priority, never an obligation, for Decima to keep track. "I know that they are all proud of me," she says, "and I'm proud of them."

There are numerous pop culture manifestations of the way friends have, for many adults, supplanted family—most notably the highly popular TV series *Friends*. For half an hour each week, the six characters struggle with life's challenges without ever once turning to their unrelentingly dysfunctional families for advice or help. Never do you see, for example, the hapless Joey talking his unimpaired Italian parents for reinforcement. It's his good buddy, Chandler, who, despite his aloofish mother and cross dressing fa-



Lowe (center) says Morris (third from left) is a "large part" of her daughter's life

ther, punks out his wallet good-naturedly and hands over the dough. Morris and Rose, siblings with well-meaning yet overbearing parents, turn to the orphaned, former actress (whom Decima spotted daddy's girl Rachel for advice).

The premonition of friends is also explored in *Decima's Tale*, the recently published first novel by Scottish actor Alan Cumming (*Spy Kids*, *The Assassination Party*). The main character, whose life is suspiciously similar to that of Cumming, fills his world with close friends who prop him up on the way a family might. The concept of friends being the most important support in a person's life is something that fascinates the author and filmmaker—he's just this project is based on a close-knit group of Londoners. "I'm obsessed with it," he says. "You outgrow your friends the way you would your family. And as much time long you are away from them, when you see them again it's like you never left."

Jean-Claude Schabot developed his close network of friends precisely because he was

so far away from home. Schabot, who's from Strasbourg, a French city on the German border, moved to Montreal for two years to get his master's degree in engineering at the Ecole Polytechnique, and then to Calgary in 1996 with a Quebecois girlfriend. He started hanging out at *The Nowe*, a bar that, on Wednesday nights, was home to the first capharnaïm community (mostly Quebecois) in town. His friends, known as the *Frangibles*, bonded very quickly. "I think it is mainly due to the fact that we don't have family around, we've left all of our friends from our youth in basements and, in order to survive socially, people open up more," he says. "And Quebec people—they like to eat, they like socialize and they like to drink." Schabot, 28, who celebrated New Year's Eve at a ski resort in B.C. with some members of the group, also travels, cross-country skis, goes to the theatre, camps and organizes theme dinners with them. "I get a lot of moral support and the feeling that I have some kind of family. There's place. You get very close and it makes you feel at home."

For Lowe, it was vital that Irene experience a sense of home even without a "real" nuclear family surrounding her. In that end, Lowe has, every Christmas for over a decade, hosted 15 or so friends and their children at her home. "Every Christmas, without fail, and even though I don't love these people my mom and our lives have gone on 10 terrific decades, everyone comes to my house," she says. "And as much as my child has been a single child she has had the full beautiful full family I've been really blessed."

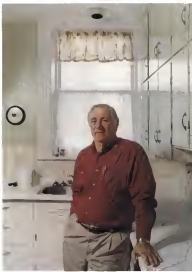
"You are tied to blood relatives, and there is a bond, but you choose to be with friends. It's a different kind of family."

MODEL HOUSING

A not-for-profit group makes rent affordable

DOROTHY SEYMOUR is 66 but it takes the look much older. Her bones are brittle and the walls with a cane. Unable to work, she often felt isolated and she was barely able to cover her living expenses. Bare on her one-bedroom apartment she gobbled up almost 75 per cent of her disability benefits. But with some 1,800 applicants for public housing in her hometown of Peterborough, Ont., Seymour expected to wait years to get into a subsidized unit. Then she met John Martyr, co-founder of the Peterborough Community Housing Development Corporation. The grassroots, not-for-profit group takes a novel yet practical approach to helping people like Seymour access affordable housing by finding and renovating empty or abandoned buildings. For their latest project, the organization refurbished Gible House, the century-old rectory of St. John's Anglican church, an eight-bedroom house that was much too large for Rev. Gordon Finney and his wife, Aileen. In late August, six single women started moving in. "The standards are superb," says Seymour of her new home where she, like the others, pays \$375 a month for a cozy bed sitting room. "I've never been in a safer, more structurally sound, better-run place."

Seymour, who asked that her real name not be used, and the others appreciate their good fortune in moving into Gible House. The shortage of low-cost housing is one of the major contributing factors to homelessness in Canada—and not just in large metropolitan centres. Peterborough, in fact, a city of 71,000 about 130 km north-east of Toronto, has been named "the homeless capital of Ontario." It earned that label designation in 2000 following an Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association study of 11 municipalities in the province, including Toronto. The study identified Peterborough had the highest per-capita percentage of residents who are just a pay-



Martyr and his Peterborough, Ont., organization help people before they end up on the street.

cheque away from living on the streets.

Martyr says that although the tide is somewhat misleading, the city does have a viable homeless population. Three years ago, the municipality set up the Warming Room to provide shelter during the winter. Last year, on average, 24 people used the room each night. This year, the shelter in a downtown church which serves an evening meal and a hot breakfast. As well, PCHDC has just found two local partners to help turn a surplus federal building—which Ottawa has donated as part of its \$559-million National Homelessness Initiative—into an emergency family shelter.

But while it's crucial to provide immediate care to those in crisis, Martyr, a long-time advocate for the homeless, says it's equally important to develop long-term solutions to prevent and alleviate homelessness. To that end, the retired teacher formed his community housing organization in 1996. Today, PCHDC, which has a volunteer board of 12 and two staff, owns or administers 35 housing units, providing affordable housing to eight individuals and 11 families with a total of 19 children. In addition to collecting rent, PCHDC receives funding from, among others, Ottawa, the municipality, and the local chapter of the



The rooms in Gible House show that low-cost rental units can be warm and welcoming.

Seays of St. Joseph, an international organization of religious women.

Unlike some of the derelict buildings PCHDC has reclaimed, Gible House, an elegant, red-brick Victorian with a full overlooking the Otonabee River, required no major structural work. Skilled tradesmen built a ramp and set in bathroom to make a ground floor unit wheelchair accessible, repaired a broken pipe in a stained glass window, and serviced the house to handle the moisture, ladders, computers and other electrical equipment. Perhaps one of the biggest jobs was painting the three-story house—it required six times more paint

than any of the organization's previous projects. The result is a warm and welcoming home, a contrast to the stereotypical image of bleak low-cost housing.

A volunteer organization, the Ontario Older Women's Network, helped locate the six seniors. Besides their own room, their \$375-a-month rent includes utilities and shared use of common rooms including kitchen, dining room and lounge room. Martyr, in turn, pays \$500-a-month to St. John's Anglican, which retains ownership of the rectory. The remaining \$1,250 goes toward PCHDC's cash flow. Seymour calls the arrangement "creative." She adds, "There

aren't any very, very reasonable and they are not subsidized. They break even. They pay other landlords more." Finney simply says it's the right thing to do. "This is the main duty of the church generally, to be a voice for those in need in our society."

Martyr's group has been creative from the beginning. Its first project was an old farmhouse, which the city owned and had budgeted \$10,000 to demolish. Instead, council gave the house, and the \$10,000, to Martyr. He raised a further \$16,000 from the Sisters of St. Joseph and then approached a small, local credit union. "They gave us a \$25,000 mortgage based on the value of the land," he said, "as the house had no value." It was then converted into two, one-bedroom apartments which rent for \$400 each, plus heat and electricity.

Other houses were also gifts. But PCHDC has bought a property as well. In 2001, Martyr's organization used a \$100,000 donation from a private citizen to purchase what he described as "a crack house, a biker gang house." The neighbours were delighted. "It saved the value of the surrounding properties," Martyr says. "It had been a bit of an eyesore." The group is now tackling its biggest project to date, converting a former 1911 wooden mall that Sir Sandford Fleming College is doing away with 50 apartments.

The group has found other ways to at least maintain the pool of affordable housing. PCHDC has a partnership with Peterborough to administer five city-owned houses that have been declared surplus. For its services, PCHDC keeps 25 per cent of the rent collected, which ranges from \$325 to \$600 a month (the \$600 rate would have a considerable reduction of at least \$900). The city pays for capital repairs on the properties, which are mortgage free. "This model could happen almost anywhere in the country," Martyr says. "I expect most municipalities have properties in their own portfolio and could easily work to a partnership with a variety of non-profit groups."

But however the group goes about providing low-cost housing, Martyr upholds the great satisfaction in helping help Peterborough residents. "What's exciting," he says, "is the community looking after itself, figuring out what it can do without some government." Still, he hopes the leading by example will bring other levels of government on board. "Where the community leads, government follows." ■

A BRUTAL MARCH

War-time diaries record a trek of 10,000 POWs

THE DIARIES, naturally, look as though they survived a war. The paper has yellowed, the covers are aging, the letters are loosed by age and harsh circumstances. At 84, Robert Buckham, ex Flight-Lieut. RCAF, 428 Squadron, 6 Group, Bomber Command, sits in the dining room of his West Vancouver home looking through a past poem with the dreams and visions of a life interrupted.

He was piloting his 19th mission over German-occupied territory when guns downed his Wellington bomber on April 8, 1943. His anti-aircraft crew were captured and imprisoned; the officers sent to Stalag Luft III, one of the Great Escape. "I told I was going to major in art there, and I did," he says. Buckham, an artist and advertising art director before and after the war, put his talent to good use. He forged travel permits under the noses of 75 fellow officers, and rounded them up and drawing of the harsh existence of a prisoner of war.

The journals begin behind the wire of the infamous camp, but they also record a lesser-known chapter of history. In the war's dying months, a ragged column of 10,000 POWs were marched through an eastern and central European winter and spring-held hostage by the desperate remnants of the German army. Buckham's illustrated diary and his paintings—tucked in a carry cylinder of soldered powdered milk cans—among the only visual record of this brutal trek in which an unknown number of prisoners died. Some diary extracts:

Stalag Luft III, Sagan, Germany, 1945

Jan. 15 A month eyes betray his hunger. Which the eyes round and narrow in they probe deeply for the taste of remembered meat. Then there again in the rooms are served, cooking time of portion, measuring with of bread also. An empty belly is a very basic thing.

The room is cold tonight. Talk concerns a number that we will be forced to march to

Buckham spent time in Stalag Luft III, where he forged documents for the Great Escape.

the west, away from the approaching Russians. Our pants are filled with anti-freeze fluid will shortly die again and we'll retreat toward bedheads, blankets and provisions. The hungry eyes will close a while.

Jan. 22 The bleak food situation continues. Breakfast was one weak cup of Nescafé. Our lunch consisted of the daily German soup ration. I was handed out—soup—each cupful containing several well-baked white maggots. Angry frustration finally surrendered to hunger, and we fished them out and ate the soup.

The theatre featured another concert of

records tonight; Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite* and a symphony by Schnittke. The power of music. The mind is carried off to a point in space with images of things. All are in a fugue in this extension of self, as one is drawn deep into the vortex of participation—then comes a zone, or a moment—then suggests rejection and the mind returns back to this reality.

Jan. 27 Absolutely no rain made the German order to us at 8:00 p.m. We were to be ready to march in one hour. A moment of disbelief was immediately followed by a reaction verging on panic. Lockers were stripped. Duffle bags were stuffed to the overflow, unpacked, and packed again.

Our room plan to travel as a group. Each



The poet, in 1943 after his capture (top left), hid his drawings and diaries from the German guards in a cylinder of powdered milk cans



of us will carry a bag on our backs. My port sashons consist of the clothing I owned in plus change of underwear, socks and shoes. The best pocket of my time holds a selected few of my letters and snapshots, plus my 21st birthday wishbook, a gift from Dad (broken since the night we were shot down). Overloading has necessitated my leaving one roll of my drawings and paintings.

Jan. 29 We left the camp at 4 a.m. As we approached the gate, food parcels were issued, one per man. The added weight and bulk had not been reckoned for. The carts were soon over, a few items selected and the remainder cast aside.

I was outside the wire for the first time in 20 months. Food froze in two bread

slopped into granular chunks. The columns melted on (throughout the endless day, covering an estimated 36 km in 6 or 8 hours and limping marchers became commonplace. We halted finally in the darkness of the bitter night, barely aware of the continuing snow and wind, numbly waiting, too cold even to light a cigarette. We shuffled

'The bleak food situation continues. Each cupful of turnip soup contained white maggots. We fished them out and ate the soup.'

forward, peering through snow-crusted bushes at the figures ahead and were absorbed into a farmyard enclosed by a barn, a stable and some small outbuildings. Following a group through the stable door, I fell onto the straw-covered floor fully dressed, leaving my back against the steaming side of a red brick horse.

Feb. 2 The coldest came to a halt in the darkness of a moonless night. A line of guards faced us, weapons at the ready. Our ranks were numbered off into groups and immediately ordered into wooden huts. We had no sense. Night, November 1944. About 40 men crowded in dark confinement. The Australian alongside me grew increasingly violent during the night, screaming

ing, growling, and banging on the door with his fists. We could do little for him. Dysentery. Bloody stool. A Red Cross box arrived yesterday, barely 30 inches from my hand. Endanger was our only resource.

■ Feb. 4: We were finally provided with water at 1:30 this afternoon, after having gone approximately 46 hours without. I made myself a cup of Khan (powdered milk).

■ Feb. 7: Marling Mission camp, Tennessee (about 30 km northwest of Berners). If there were a contest in which all the risks of the world participated, our risk would take first prize in danger and the ability to penetrate broken windows, and sheer wetness.

■ Feb. 13: While attempting a circus of the camp this morning my legs began to fail me, and I tumbled back to bed. Weakness is a commonplace symptom throughout the camp.

■ Feb. 15: My arms and neck are now aching; thus, my ribs are very evident and the hollow between neck and collarbone is emphasized. Striving for novelty, I shaved this afternoon, removing my beard for the first time in months and my razorache for the first time in years. It was an act in judgment. I'm not only thin, I am gaunt!

■ April 6: Two years ago this day, we were shot down over Busham at 13:32 p.m. Another V2 [rocket] was fired last night and rumor has it sources as being an experimental rocket about three km north of camp.

■ April 9: We are waiting to leave camp. A number of us broke into the kitchen supplies this afternoon in order to obtain white soap powder, which we spread over the sand of the parade ground. Forming POW and RAF in huge letters and indicating our likely route with a large arrow.

■ April 12: The sun-bright morning was dulled by the news that two men were killed and seven wounded yesterday afternoon when the naval column, which is trailing us, was strafed by an Allied fighter.

■ April 14: We moved off at 9:30, our route taking us through the gently rolling hills of a lush farming area as we lurched in the warm morning sun. The guards were in a relaxed mood, and trading with the farmhouses in route was widespread. A half can of powdered coffee yielded 10 eggs from a redheaded girl as I spoke with her at the kitchen door. The upturned rear window glinted momentarily as she in shocking contrast to our shabby and disorderly existence.



'My ribs are very evident and the hollow between neck and collarbone is top-sand'

The Allies are reported to be 122 km southwest of Hamburg. Our guards have already surrendered in spirit, if not in fact. ■ April 24: Lubek. This is a strange prison. Each floor contains but one washroom, the toilet usually out of order, which we apparently share with the guards. It's a unique experience to share the toilet with two armed guards sensibly absorbed on either side and another shoving at the sink. But so are we now the norm.

■ May 3: We are free. It happened yesterday. The morning brought rumors that the 11th Division of Montgomery's 2nd Army is in Lubek. The prospect overlooking the city was constantly crowded as we watched the aircraft fly

over the city to the accompaniment of the sounds of raised gunfire on the ground. At 5:20 p.m., an armoured tank appeared on the road, drenched out of the smoke as it approached the camp. The lead tank stopped opposite the camp, the turret opened, and a knitted figure popped out and waved in our direction.

The tension broke. A roar of cheers, mobile-made flags waving, laughter and tears mingling, the guards running off, weapons; men clanking the wire to run to the tanks, men embracing each other, shouting incoherently, men kneeling to pray, men staring wearily, bewildered, thousands of men in a state of hysterical, blessed release.

CLOSINGNOTES



PEOPLE | 52

Angèle Dubeau and the rare violin. This Montreal-based musician from Sherbrooke, Que., has made 22 albums; her latest, *Notes of the World*, was done with La Pinta, an all-female string ensemble from Montreal. Adding to the recording is Dubeau's use of a 17th-century violin.



TV | 54

First they write, then they fight. The relationship between Ernest Hemingway and Winston Churchill gets a four-hour treatment.



Listings | The winter blues

The Blues Summit
Jan. 25-27
At the gathering of Canada's blues community, musicians will meet with booking agents and record companies as well as mingle with fans. The weekend wraps up with the annual Maple Blues Awards. Toronto.

North American Mountain Truck Nationals, Feb. 7-8
Featuring drivers dubbed as the "most fun of motor sports," this event at Capen Coliseum includes a demolition derby and truck racing. And kids can ride in the back of a monster-sized Toyota truck. Houston.

Life Integer
Jan./Feb. 22
A variety of works from the established Winnipeg-born artist is displayed at the Vancouver Art Gallery. The theme, which derives its name from a surrealist artist and security, is made up of 18 sculptures, paintings and photographs from the past 13 years of MacGregor's career. Vancouver.

Freestyle Music Festival, Feb. 23
This musical event gives fans the chance to hear live music from the 1960s and now includes acts of indie, from hip-hop to reggae. The event is held at the historic Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, Tenn.

Music | Singing for a city's invisible women

All the women glorified with truth and fear, each alone. As we after us come like we offer up a devil.

As a former employee of a drop-in centre for Vancouver's sex-trade workers, Elaine Allan knew too many women claimed by drugs, disease and murder on the city's streets. "In 20 years of working in the Downtown Eastside I never got a single woman into a detox bed," she says. "There were never any available." As a result, Allan helped found the Via Nova Society, which is working to finance and operate a modern four-bed treatment and recovery house for disadvantaged women.

These plans received a huge boost this holiday season from 80 of Canada's top musicians. In a triumph of compassion over

A charity project by Veronica (left) and Debbie (right) driving around like women.

THE DETAILS

The women behind the Via Nova Society are Veronica (left) and Debbie (right) driving around like women.



logistics, they provided their voices for "The Seventh Wave" live, a song written by Vancouver musicians Gary Duffett, Wycliffe Groat and John Ellis. Moved by the case of the missing Downtown Eastside women, the songwriters were looking to create a memorial. They ran up the Grand Street Society, where the song and decided the proceeds would go to Via Nova. "Something that works," says Dubeau. Although Robert Pickman has been charged with the murder of 15 Downtown Eastside women, more than 40 are still officially listed as missing. And, says Peterson, society also treats as invisible those well on the street. "When you look at somebody and really see them," he says, "it makes it more difficult for them to disappear."

The participants include Sarah Harmer, Geoff Downes, Steven Page and Jim Cuddy. "It's too beautiful to make me cry," says Allan. "It's a bright light in an otherwise dark chapter in our history." —NEN MACQUEEN



CULINARY CONFESSIONS

Cooking is a gift, a ritualized, absorbing activity. My mother is gifted. I am not.

MY FRIEND Kathy is hosting brunch for 11 people. She plans to make an egg casserole, a fruit salad and maybe some sausage. She also wants to have warm, homemade muffins waiting for people as they arrive. Kathy—a political columnist at an East Coast newspaper—is panicked. “I am 34 years old,” she cries over the phone. “I interview politicians, no problem. I’m trying to make muffins from scratch? Aw, hell, where’s a mom?” Four months pregnant and determined to ensure morning sickness before the baby is born, Kathy won’t use a spoon. She’ll dig out a dusty box of baking powder and recite positive affirmations (“I will cook wonderful muffins, I am a good cook”—all for “real” food to feed her friends. But 7d waver it’ll be months before the cooking begins.

Kathy and I share the same culinary guilt: It’s born of knowing how special home-cooked meals are, and yet not having the time (or skill or equipment or recipe) to make them. The secret shame burns every time I cooie friends into meeting for supper at a restaurant. Or promise to bring to their dinner both wine and dessert—then the best bakery in town, mind you. I know, deep down, that ordering pizza for a party is no longer appropriate. Even Chinese takeout is wearing thin. I’ve outgrown easy food solutions but my kitchen skills haven’t caught up.

Twenty years ago, a woman in her 30s wouldn’t have thought twice about cooking brunch or dinner for friends and family. By the time she was 13 years old, this young woman would have already baked hundreds of pies, made jams and chutneys as gifts and cooked a turkey to perfection. Even if she were not naturally inclined to the culinary arts, this woman would know how to time different dishes so that all the food would be when placed on the table. She would have, if not linen, clean cloth napkins—and would know that no matter how awful, folded paper towels are still folded paper towels. A man, on the other hand, was not so carefully trained. Perhaps that’s why so many of my male friends are leaping to the challenge

with an enthusiasm and confidence that a number of my female friends lack.

My boyfriend, for one, is a fabulous cook. Like the best of them, he embraces the whole experience. He understands that cooking is not just about good food but it is also about the wine, the candles, the centerpiece and the music playing in the background. One of his period gifts for Christmas was from his parents—a beautiful majolica platter he’d coveted for months. He was like a child with a toy discovering the joys of a whisk. He would sit with food and, in honour of his skill, I gave him his first copper pot—the ultimate food-geek valentine.

I’m loath to admit that I’ve never cooked for him. My problem is that I am purely bad by knowledge. I come from a family of cooking legends. My great-grandmother—whose father made a fortune in carrying food—had a full-time staff, including a cook. Despite the cook’s ability, my perfectionist ancestor worked alongside her staff preparing meals, especially when entertaining guests. My mother, trained at the Cadogan Hotel kitchen school in Paris and former Toronto

Star food editor, is renowned for her excellent table. She could, if stuck, make culinary magic with lentils, liver and broccoli.

I am not so blessed. Several years ago, I casually invited colleagues over for supper, never having hosted a dinner party before. An hour before my guests arrived, my main dish—chili—didn’t look right. It looked, well, like baby poop. I called my mother. “Mum, it looks like baby poop. It’s awful!” My mother calmly listed ingredients I might have missed. “Tomatoes?” Check. “Chili powder?” Check. “Beef?” Check. If I held the phone over the pot and stir, do you think you’ll be able to tell what’s wrong? My mother, God bless her, agreed to try. I stirred. I waited. “Did you put the red kidney beans in?” No. My mother, it’s clear, is gifted.

And cooking is a gift, a ritualized, absorbing activity that gives much to the chef as to the guests. For the person who has slaved away over a hot stove for hours, there is immense satisfaction in knowing a meal was beautifully designed. It appears to the most basic instincts—to feed and nourish people you love. Mixed into each dish is emotion that might be hard to express in words but is crystal clear with the first taste of piping hot, creamy mashed potatoes and slices of rare roast beef. The stories and laughter shared over an excellent meal create a special bond between people.

I know how food should look, taste and be presented. I know which fork goes where and that plates should be warmed beforehand. I can recite in my sleep the rules to making an excellent gravy, but I can’t ever make it as immaculate as my mother’s. And, unfortunately for those I love, I haven’t tried all that hard. I’ve been blessed, surrounded by wonderful cooks. (In fact, the full house of my situation was revealed when my boyfriend e-mailed my mother a recipe for her New Year’s Eve party.) But, like Kathy, I’m fed up with muffins and ordering in. I want the satisfaction that comes from feeding friends and family. I want the smell of freshly baked food drifting through my house. Performance anxiety is no longer an adequate excuse. I will cook wonderful muffins. I am a good cook. I will tell myself. And as I hang up from Kathy, leaving her to the seemingly simple task of making a fruit salad, I hear one final word. “Why didn’t my mother teach me how to cut a mango?” ■

Amy Cameron is a Montreal-based editor at gooseandmoose.ca.



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